PRINCESS KNIGHT

part 2

Osamu Tezuka

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VERTICAL.

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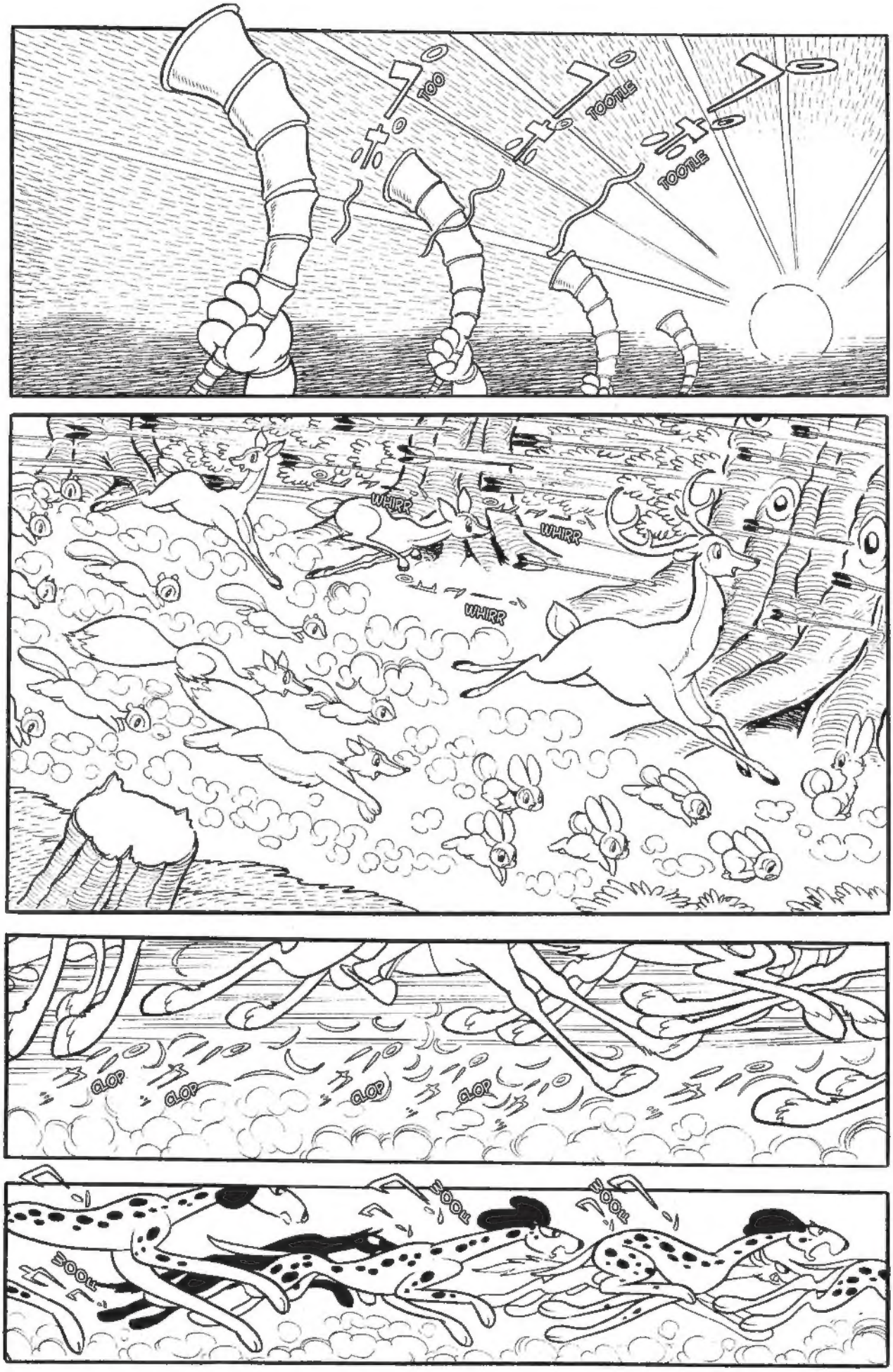
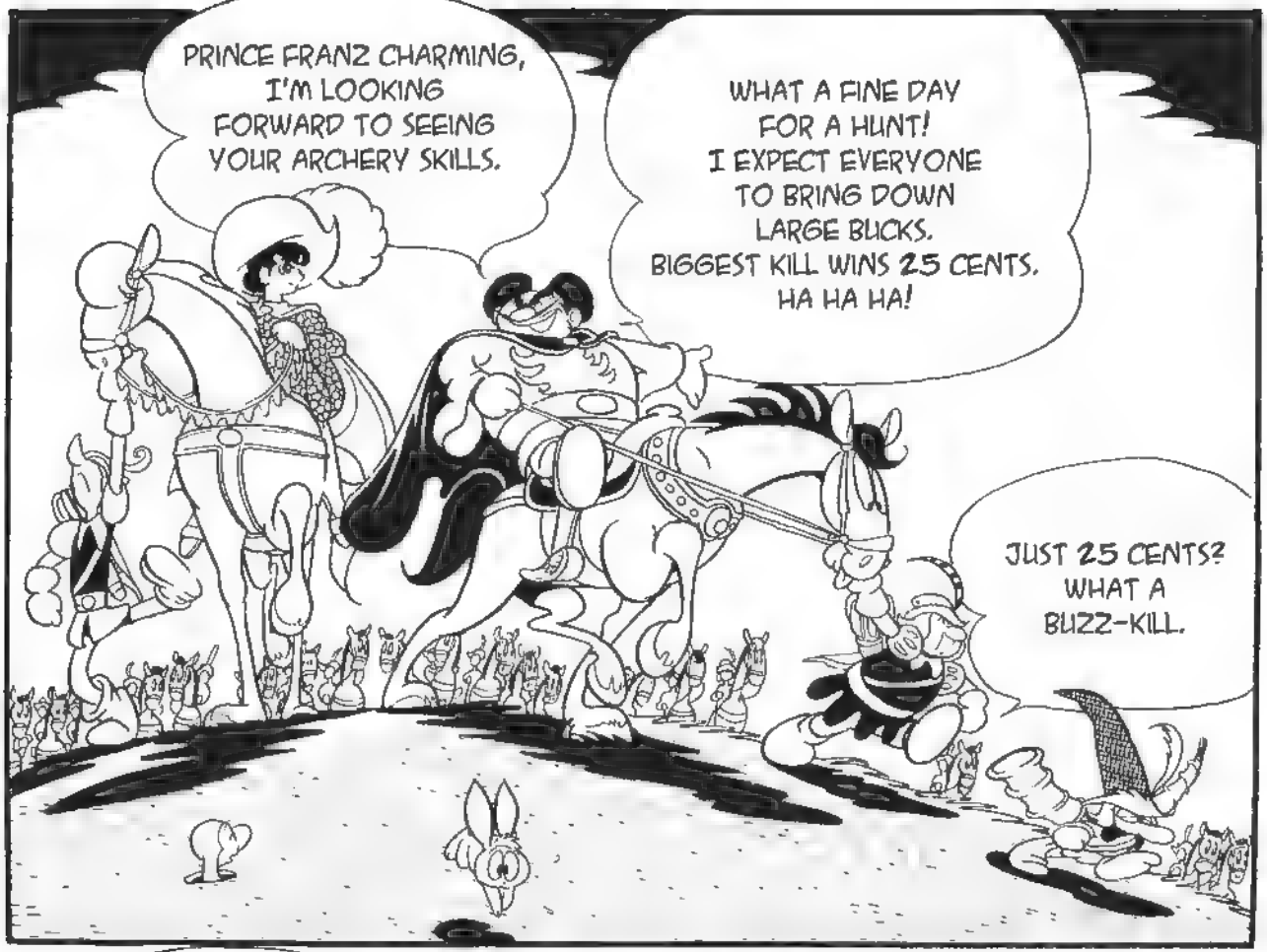
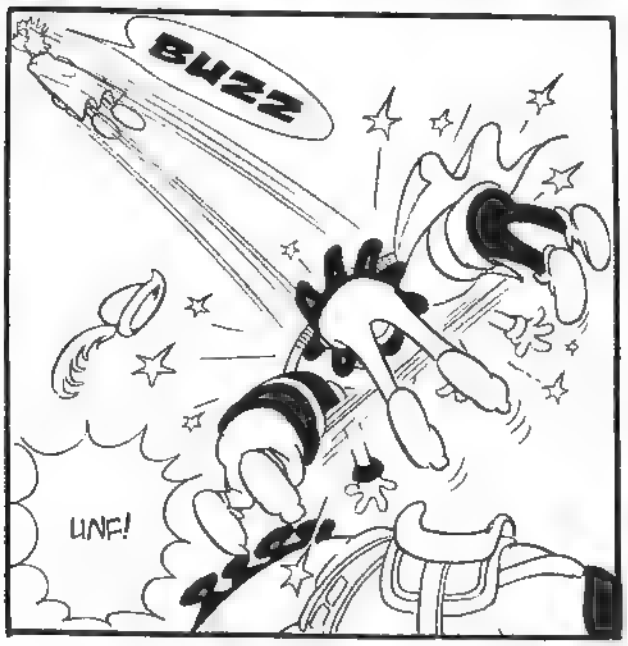
Chapter 17

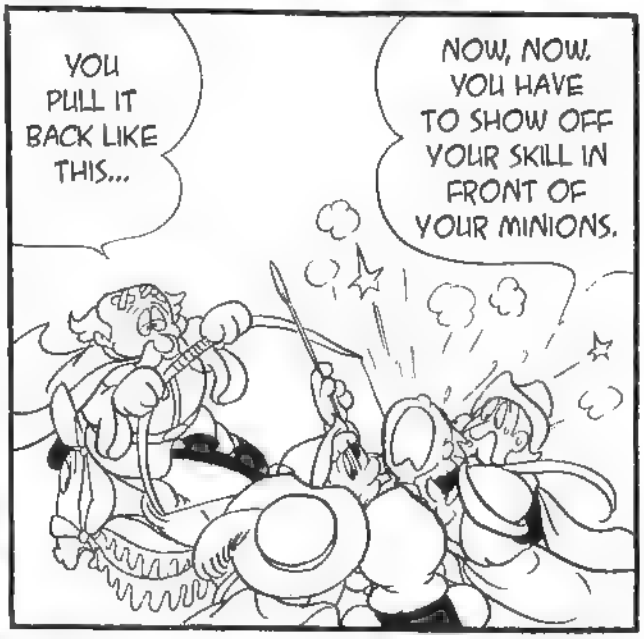
A Happening in the Hawthorn Forest

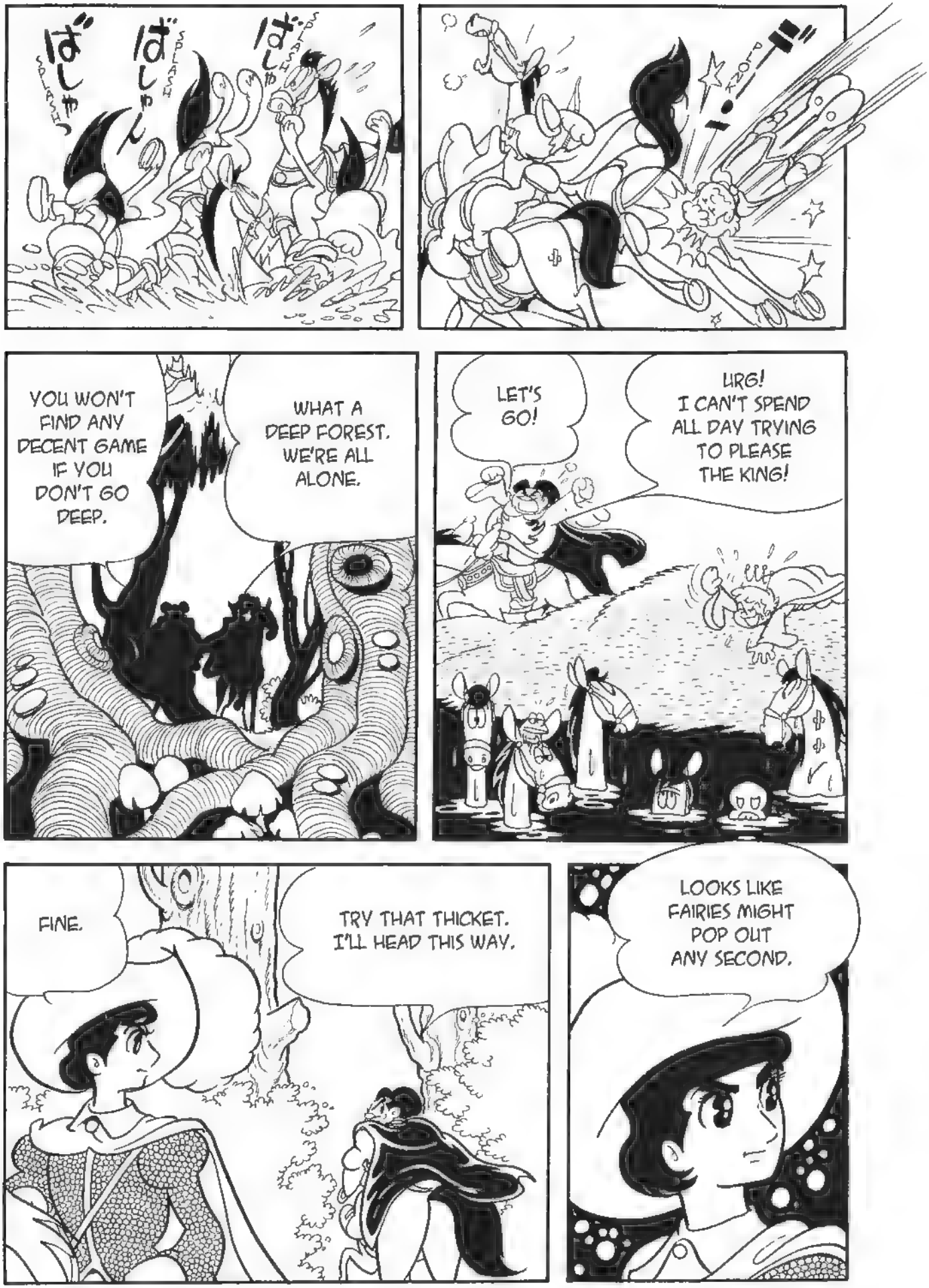

TOO
TOOTLE
TOOTLE
WHIRR
WHIRR
WHIRR
CLOP
CLOP
CLOP
CLOP
BOOM
BOOM
BOOM


PRINCE FRANZ CHARMING, I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING YOUR ARCHERY SKILLS.
WHAT A FINE DAY FOR A HUNT! I EXPECT EVERYONE TO BRING DOWN LARGE BUCKS. BIGGEST KILL WINS 25 CENTS. HA HA HA!
JUST 25 CENTS? WHAT A BUZZ-KILL.

I DON'T WANT IT! I WANT A LOLLIPOP!
HERE'S YOUR BOW, KING PLASTIC.


BUZZ
UNF!


YOU PULL IT BACK LIKE THIS...
NOW, NOW. YOU HAVE TO SHOW OFF YOUR SKILL IN FRONT OF YOUR MINIONS.


ばしゃっ
SPLASH
ばしゃん
SPLASH
ばしゃ
SPLASH
KNOCK
YOU WON'T FIND ANY DECENT GAME IF YOU DON'T GO DEEP.
WHAT A DEEP FOREST. WE'RE ALL ALONE.
LET'S GO!
URG! I CAN'T SPEND ALL DAY TRYING TO PLEASE THE KING!
FINE.
TRY THAT THICKET. I'LL HEAD THIS WAY.
LOOKS LIKE FAIRIES MIGHT POP OUT ANY SECOND.

IT'S LIKE A DREAM! IT'S PRINCE FRANZ!
IT'S HIM...
AH!
OH FRANZ...
AM I HEARING THINGS? IS IT A BIRD? OR A BABBLING BROOK?
IT'S ME, PRINCE FRANZ.
A FEMALE VOICE... ONE I'VE HEARD BEFORE.
WHO CALLS ME?

WHY DO YOU HIDE? COME OUT!
YES, IT'S YOUR VOICE! WHERE ARE YOU, FAIR MAIDEN?
THE FLAXEN-HAIRED MAIDEN?
'TIS I, THE FLAXEN-HAIRED MAIDEN!
I'VE BEEN SEARCHING FOR YOU! EVER SINCE PRINCE SAPPHIRE STOLE YOU AWAY, I'VE NEVER STOPPED THINKING OF YOU!
WHY NOT ?
I CANNOT REVEAL MYSELF TO YOU.
WHY DO YOU HIDE? OR IS THIS ALL SOME FAIRY DECEIT?
PLEASE COME OUT. SHOW YOURSELF.

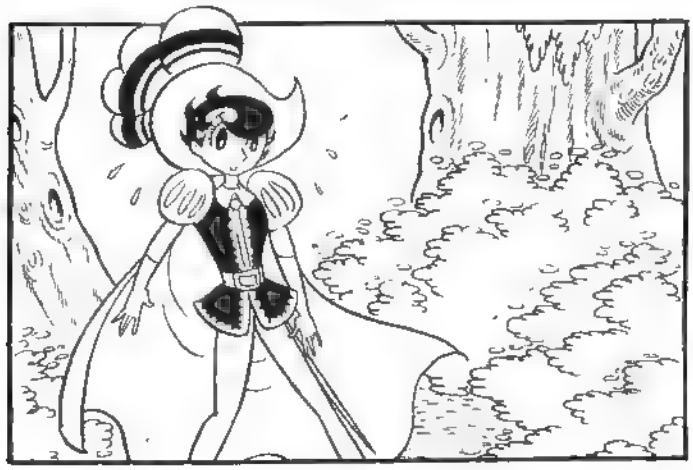
THAT'S THE DUKE SHOUTING!
うわーっ
HEH HEH. DUKE DURALUMIN, I PRESUME?
W-WHO ARE YOU, SCOUNDRELS?
OH! SIR NYLON! HOW NOW!

WAAH! H-HELP!
I DON'T CARE ABOUT RICHES. I'M TAKING YOU PRISONER.
W-WAIT! I'LL MAKE YOU RICH!
GAME OVER. YOUR MINIONS ARE NOWHERE TO BE SEEN.
WHAT'S WRONG? WHO ARE THESE MEN?
EEK! PRINCE CHARMING, HELP ME!
SO YOU'RE THE BANDIT LEADER.
AND WHO MIGHT YOU BE?
WHAT?
BANDITS! THEY MUST'VE SNUCK IN!

HMPH.
I'M NO BANDIT,
I'M A PIRATE!
AND I'M NOT ABOUT
TO LOSE TO SOME
LANDLUBBER BRAT!
COME, BANDIT!
I CHALLENGE YOU
TO A DUEL IN
THE DUKE'S STEAD!

GO, GO,
CAP'N!
DROP DEAD,
BRAT!
YEAH, CAP'N!
YOU'VE GOT
'IM!

I'LL NOT WASTE
THE BREATH
TO TELL YOU!
LET'S SETTLE THIS FIRST!
YOU'RE PRETTY
GOOD, KID!
WHAT'S YOUR NAME?



AH!
TSUKI

...
YOU'RE... PRINCE SAPPHIRE!
NOW I UNDERSTAND WHY THESE PIRATES ATTACKED DUKE DURALUMIN!
YOU'RE THE ONE BEHIND THIS! I THOUGHT SOMETHING WAS FISHY.
HUNH! I SEE HOW IT IS!
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO PUT THEM UP TO IT! HAVE YOU REALLY STOOPED SO LOW THAT YOU KEEP SUCH COMPANY?
YOU SPINELESS COWARD!

SHE MAY SEEM LIKE A MAN, BUT SHE'S ACTUALLY A WOMAN DRESSING UP AS A MAN.
I KNOW THAT!
THERE'S SOMETHING YOU SHOULD KNOW, KID.
HE STOLE AWAY THE FLAXEN-HAIRED MAIDEN!
THERE'S A REASON I'LL NEVER FORGIVE HIM!
I DON'T CARE IF HE'S A GIRL OR A BABY,
WHERE, EXACTLY?
IN THE FOREST?
I HEARD THE MAIDEN'S VOICE IN THE FOREST JUST NOW!

SAPPHIRE WAS THERE JUST NOW,
OH, REALLY? HOW CURIOUS.
OVER IN A CLEARING BY THAT THICKET.
OR—
ARE YOU SAYING SAPPHIRE IMITATED THE MAIDEN?
WAITING TO AMBUSH OUR ENEMY.
OR...?

...
...
...
NO! IT CAN'T BE! IMPOSSIBLE...!
HOW'S THIS? IT'S BROWN, BUT IT'S A GIRL'S WIG.
ER, NO GOOD. A MAN'S TOUPEE.
HERE, I BROUGHT DISGUISES. WIGS AND CLOTHES.
WHAT'RE YOU DOING? STOP!
THE NERVE.
THAT'LL DO.

NO!
I DON'T WANT TO
WEAR IT! ACK!
YOU... YOU'RE...
IT'S YOU!
WHY... OH, WHY
DIDN'T I EVER
REALIZE?
AH!

WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL ME? YOUR SILENCE MADE ME SUFFER. I HATED AND RESENTED YOU. WHAT A TERRIBLE WASTE OF ANGER!
THE FLAXEN-HAIRED MAIDEN IS SAPPHIRE! I CAN'T BELIEVE HOW FOOLISH I AM! HA HA HA!
I'M NOT HER! IT'S A COINCIDENTAL RESEMBLANCE!
NO! YOU'RE WRONG! I'M NOT...
HEY, FRANZ! ARE YOU REALLY GONNA TAKE SAPPHIRE'S SIDE? HE'S AN EXILED, DISGRACED PRINCE!
I WON'T LET YOU GO. I'LL CARRY YOU BACK TO MY CASTLE AND MEND THE WOUNDS IN YOUR MISCHIEVOUS, BEAUTIFUL HEART.

YOU FOOLED ME INTO THINKING THAT SAPPHIRE WAS A VILLAINOUS CREATURE. BUT I SEE NOW HOW BADLY I WAS MISTAKEN.
SORRY, DUKE DURALUMIN. BUT I DON'T TRUST YOU ANYMORE.
WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO WRING THAT INFO OUTTA HIM.
I-I-IMPOSSIBLE! WHERE'S YOUR PROOF?
TURNS OUT YOU MIGHT BE THE REAL VILLAIN!
LEMME AT HIM. I'LL MAKE 'IM TALK.
NYLON!
URGH!

OW!
GAH!
HELP!
TALK, OR I'LL SQUEEZE!
HONK.
NOW IT'S YOUR TURN! YA BETTER SPILL EVERY LAST BEAN!
SKREE
BEEWEE

BAD NEWS! IT'LL BE TOO LATE IF THEY DECLARE THEIR LOVE!
CURSES !
OH, NO. PRINCE FRANZ IS HOLDING THAT WRETCH SAPPHIRE'S HAND!
O CLOUDS! O THUNDER! WHIP UP A STORM! I COMMAND THEE, POUR DOWN RAIN AND DRIVE THOSE LOWLY HUMANS TWAIN!
ZHAAA

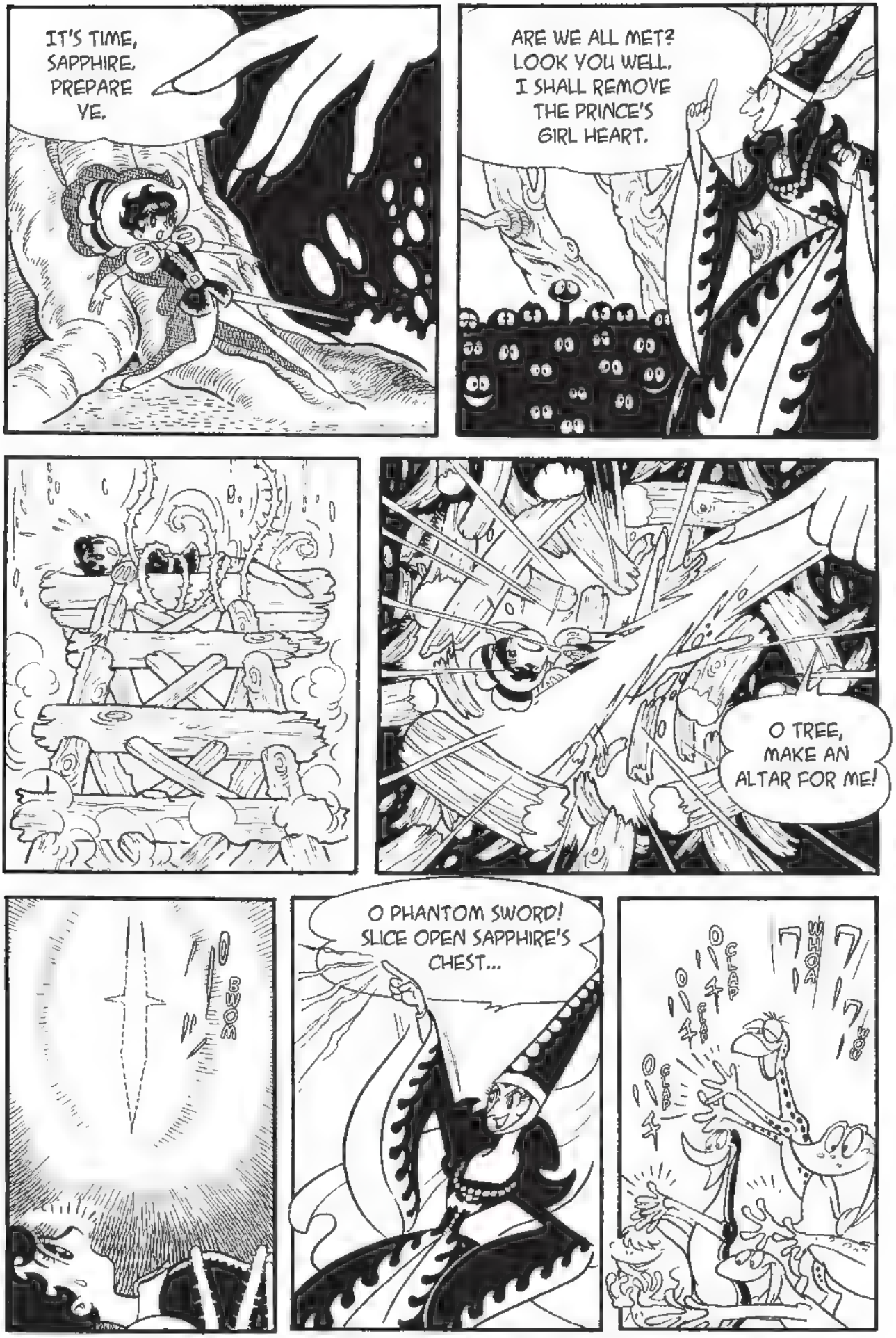
WHOA! A DOWNPOUR! WHAT NOW?
ACK! I'M SCARED!
AH! SAPPHIRE!
NYLON, NOW'S YOUR CHANCE! RUN!
HONK...

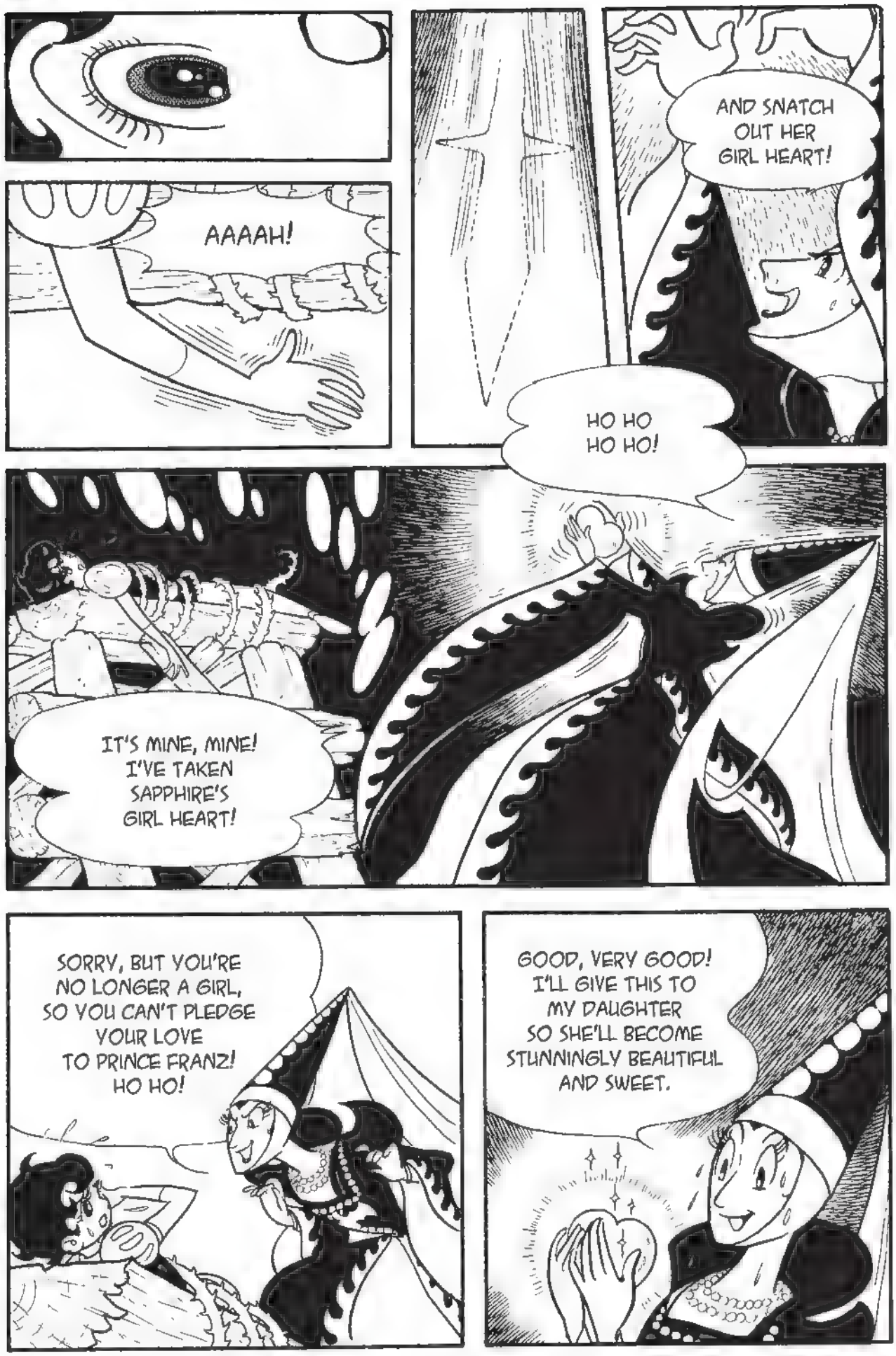
SLIP
HEY!
WHERE IS
EVERYONE?!
SAPPHIRE,
WHERE
ARE YOU?

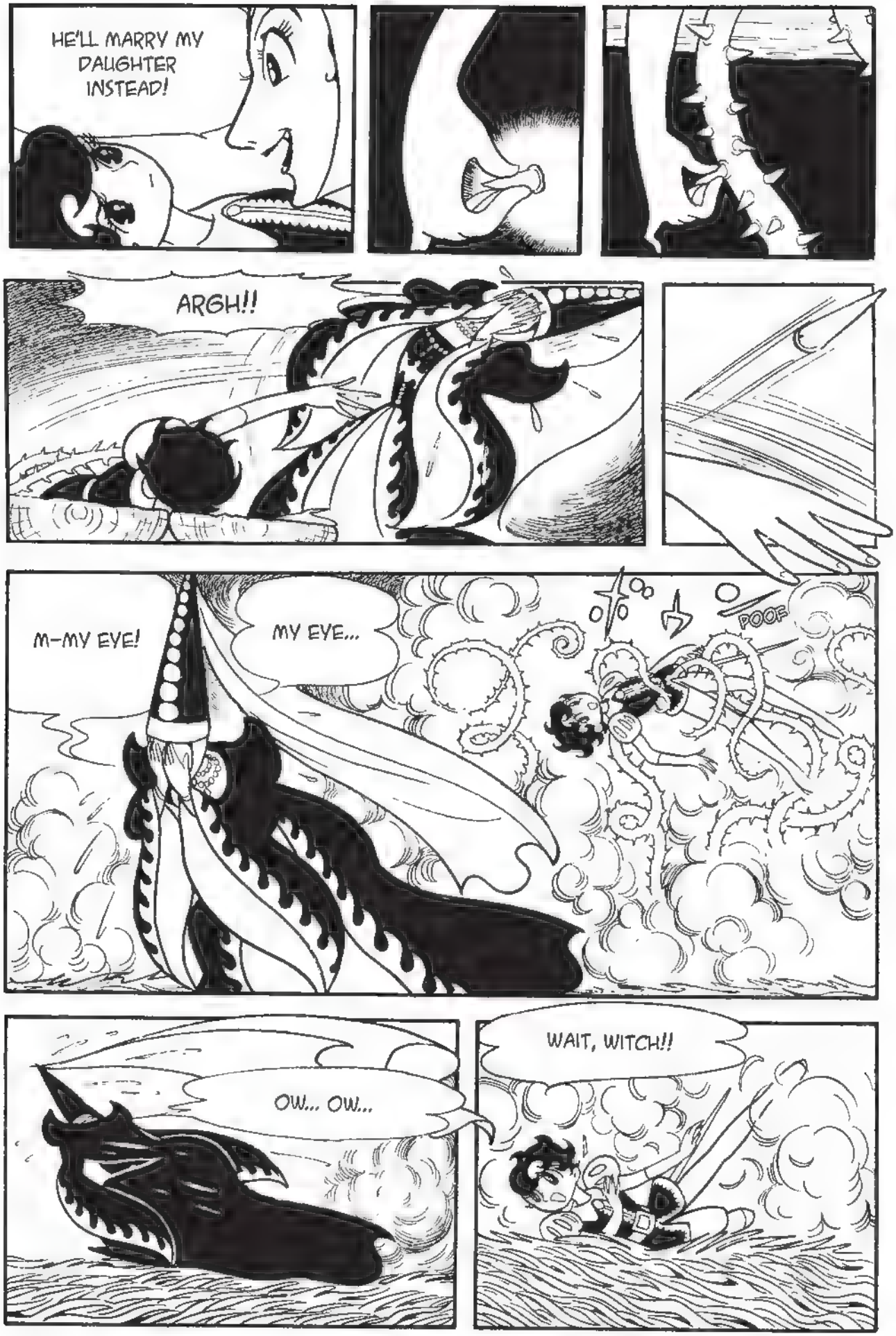
POOF
EVERYONE'S SCATTERED IN THE STORM. YOU'RE ALL ALONE. NOW I GET TO MAKE MINCEMEAT OUT OF YOU!
OH, HO HO HO HO HO HO HO! HELLO, SAPPHIRE. LONG TIME NO SEE. REMEMBER ME?

ZAP
RRRUMBLE
CURSE YOU, WITCH!
SHING
AH!
KRAKLE
RAIN, DISPERSE! O MISTS, IMMERSE!
STOP RESISTING. YOU CAN'T WIN, SO DON'T FIGHT BACK.

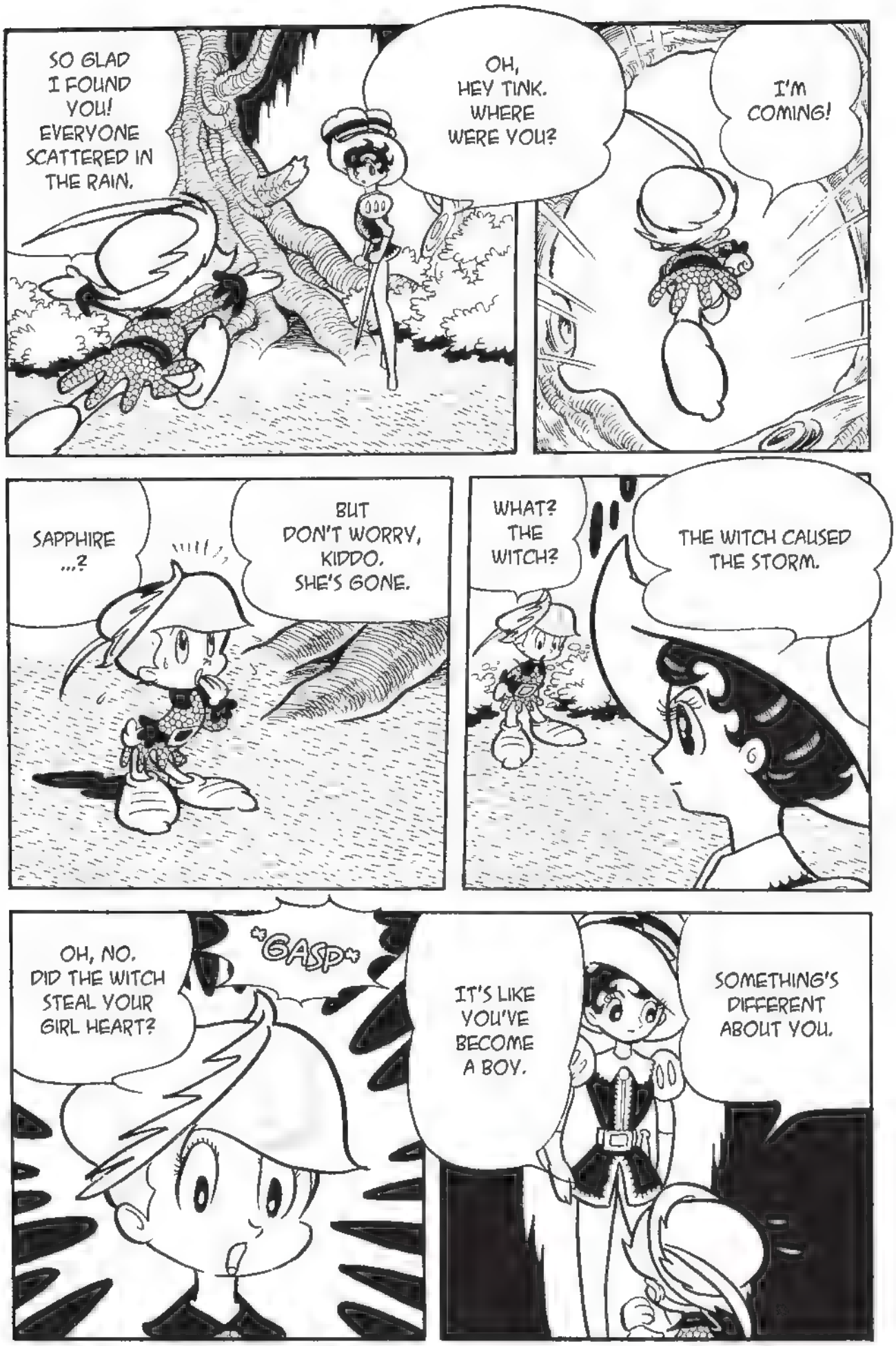
AH!
HEH HEH.
DON'T BE SURPRISED.
I'M JUST MAKING SURE
YOU CAN'T RUN AWAY.
AYE, MADAM!
WE'RE THE DEMON
QUEEN'S FAVORITES!
COME OUT,
MY MINIONS!
THE QUEEN'S
PUTTING YOU
ON TRIAL!
HO HO!
NOW WE CELEBRATE!
WE FOUND
THE PRINCE!


IT'S TIME, SAPPHIRE. PREPARE YE.
ARE WE ALL MET? LOOK YOU WELL. I SHALL REMOVE THE PRINCE'S GIRL HEART.
O TREE, MAKE AN ALTAR FOR ME!
BWOM
O PHANTOM SWORD! SLICE OPEN SAPPHIRE'S CHEST...
WHOA
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP


AAAAH!
AND SNATCH OUT HER GIRL HEART!
HO HO HO HO!
IT'S MINE, MINE! I'VE TAKEN SAPPHIRE'S GIRL HEART!
SORRY, BUT YOU'RE NO LONGER A GIRL, SO YOU CAN'T PLEDGE YOUR LOVE TO PRINCE FRANZ! HO HO!
GOOD, VERY GOOD! I'LL GIVE THIS TO MY DAUGHTER SO SHE'LL BECOME STUNNINGLY BEAUTIFUL AND SWEET.

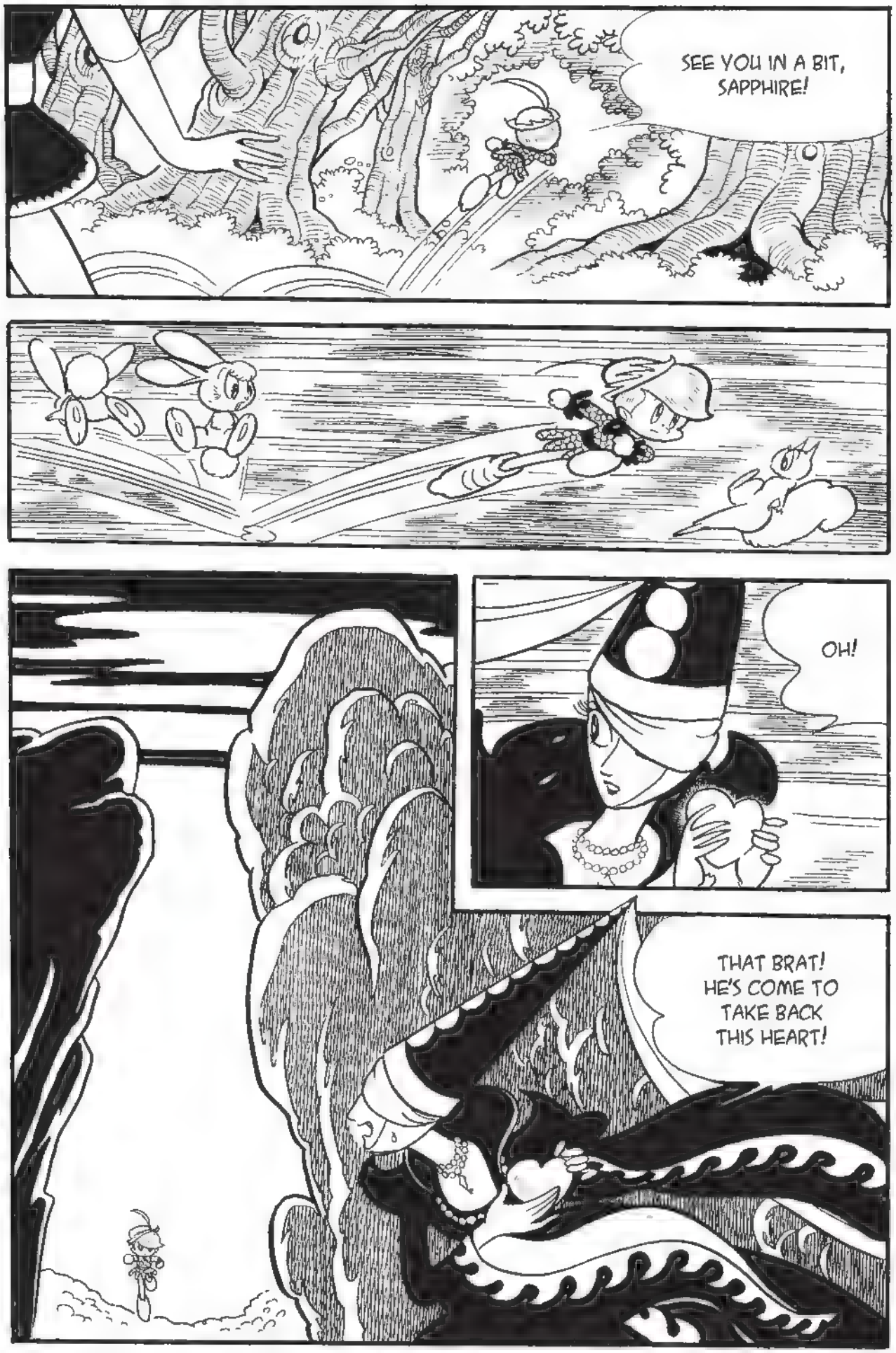

HE'LL MARRY MY DAUGHTER INSTEAD!
ARGH!!
M-MY EYE!
MY EYE...
POOF
OW... OW...
WAIT, WITCH!!

FWASH
YOU HAVEN'T SEEN THE LAST OF ME, SAPPHIRE!
OH, IT HURTS!
AH... THE MIST SUDDENLY CLEARED.
SAPPHIRE'S VOICE!
HELLO! ANYONE THERE? PRINCE FRANZ! CAPTAIN BLOOD!


SO GLAD I FOUND YOU! EVERYONE SCATTERED IN THE RAIN.
OH, HEY TINK. WHERE WERE YOU?
I'M COMING!
SAPPHIRE ...?
BUT DON'T WORRY, KIDDO. SHE'S GONE.
WHAT? THE WITCH?
THE WITCH CAUSED THE STORM.
OH, NO. DID THE WITCH STEAL YOUR GIRL HEART?
GASP
IT'S LIKE YOU'VE BECOME A BOY.
SOMETHING'S DIFFERENT ABOUT YOU.

WHAT'RE YOU YAPPING ABOUT? I'M A MAN!
PSST, SAPPHIRE, YOU CAN WHISPER IT TO ME. TRY SAYING SOMETHING GIRLY.
QUIT IT, PUNK! I'M A MAN, SEE?
JUST TRY IT. SAY SOMETHING CUTE.
NO, YOU CAN BE A GIRL, TOO.
?
THE EVIL WITCH STOLE SAPPHIRE'S GIRL HEART!!
OH, NO!!

DUNNO. SHE VANISHED AROUND THERE. I'M NOT SURE.
WHERE'D THE WITCH GO? I'LL GO GET YOUR HEART BACK!
KROAK!!
YOU WON'T TELL? OK! ONE... TWO...
HEY, YOU'RE ONE OF THE WITCH'S MINIONS, RIGHT? TELL ME WHICH WAY SHE WENT. IF YOU DON'T, I'LL THROW YOU SO HIGH YOU'LL TURN INTO STARDUST!
KROAK.
THAT WAY? THANKS.


SEE YOU IN A BIT, SAPPHIRE!
OH!
THAT BRAT! HE'S COME TO TAKE BACK THIS HEART!

ROCKS, BREAK AND FLATTEN HIM INTO A PANCAKE!
KRUMBLE
WHUD
WHUD
WHAAA
SHRK
SHRK

LET'S HURRY BACK TO MY CASTLE BEFORE THE WEATHER TURNS FOUL AGAIN.
THERE YOU ARE! YOU'RE ALL RIGHT!
SAPPHIRE!
MARRY ME? HA HA! OH PRINCE FRANZ, YOU JOKESTER!
I WANT TO MARRY YOU.
SAPPHIRE, NO MATTER IF MY UNCLE OR ANYONE ELSE OPPOSES IT
YOU DON'T HAVE TO KEEP UP THE ACT. YOU CAN TALK LIKE A GIRL, YOU KNOW.
WHAT?
YOU'RE BARKING UP THE WRONG TREE. I'M A PRINCE.

YOU SAY I'M A WOMAN? DO I LOOK LIKE IT?
HOW STUPID! WHY WOULD I TALK LIKE A GIRL?
YES! YOU'RE NOT A MAN! YOU'RE THE FLAXEN-HAIRED MAIDEN!
SOMEONE PLEASE TELL ME WHAT IS GOING ON? I DON'T UNDERSTAND!
YOU DARE INSULT ME?
JUST TRY SAYING THAT AGAIN! I'LL LET YOU HAVE IT!

WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR EYE, MOM?
I'LL TELL YOU LATER. TAKE A LOOK AT THIS.
WHAT?
IT'S SAPPHIRE'S GIRL HEART! MOMMY FINALLY STOLE IT FOR YOU! SWALLOW THIS, HECATE, AND BECOME THE MOST BEAUTIFUL, GENTLE AND WONDROUS GIRL IN THE WORLD! THEN YOU CAN MARRY PRINCE FRANZ AND CARRY ALL OF GOLDLAND IN THE PALM OF YOUR HAND! HO HO HO!

Chapter 18

The Kitten and the Angel

HE'S ROUGH, TOTALLY UNFEMININE.
HO HO HO! ONCE I STOLE HER GIRL HEART SHE TURNED RIGHT INTO A BOY!
AND WHAT HAPPENED TO SAPPHIRE?
CAN'T SWEAR TO LOVE HIM ANYMORE!
SO OF COURSE PRINCE FRANZ
... FINE, I'LL SWALLOW THE GIRL HEART. GO PUT SOME DROPS IN YOUR EYE.
I DON'T WANT TO SEE YOU SWALLOW IT ANYWAY. I JUST WANT TO SEE YOUR NEWLY GENTLE SELF!

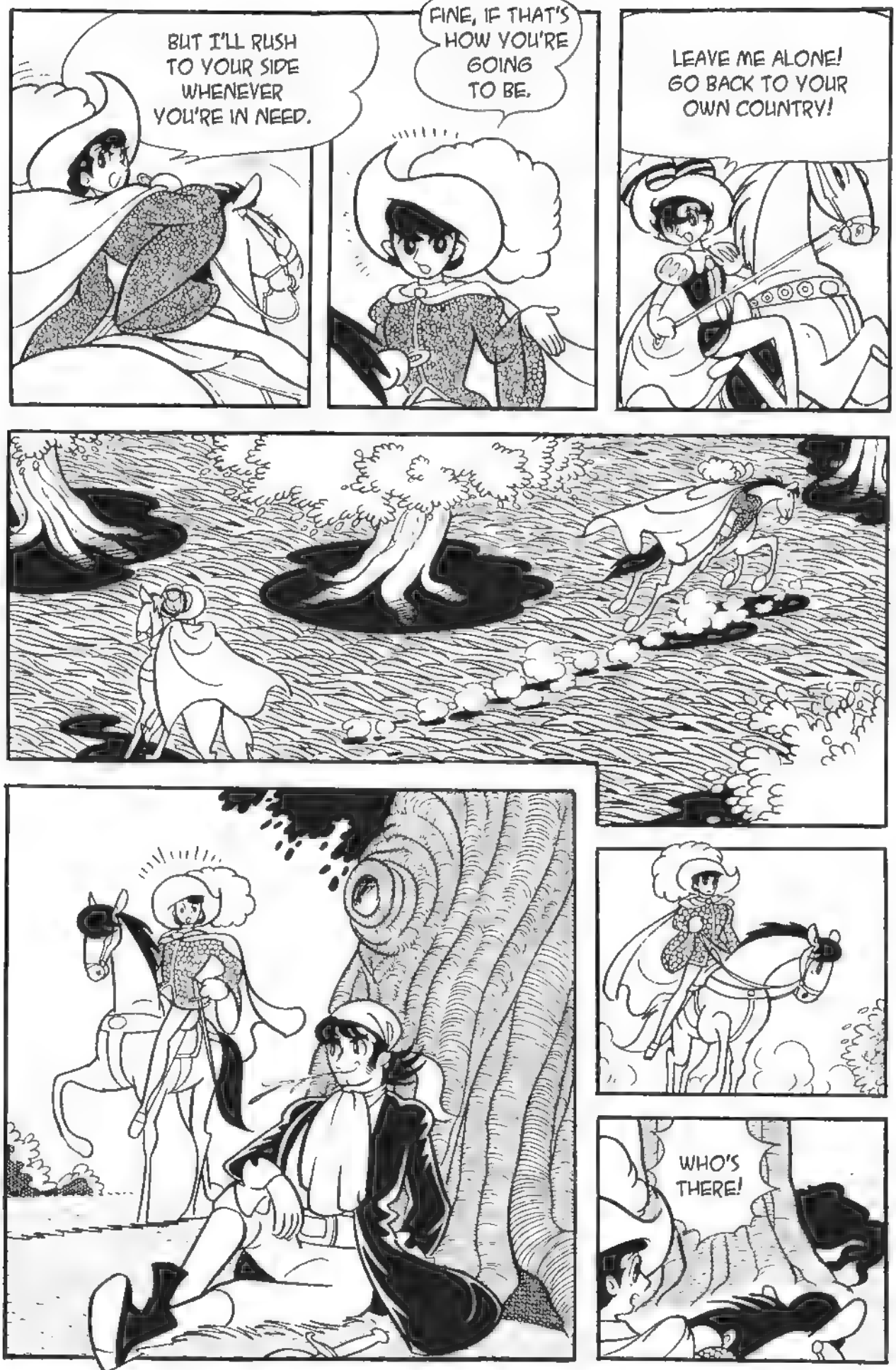
I'VE GOT TO BRING HECATE TO PRINCE FRANZ ONCE SHE BECOMES MORE LADY-LIKE.
HOW LOVELY, HECATE!
OH, MOTHER, LOOK AT ME NOW!
AND YOUR VOICE IS SO SOFT AND GIRLISH!

THAT'S NOT ODD AT ALL! YOU'RE SO DIFFERENT! SO FABULOUSLY FEMININE!
I'VE BEEN REBORN! I SUDDENLY WANT TO TAKE UP CROSS-STITCHING AND PLAY THE PIANO. HOW ODD.
I CAN'T JUST SIT HERE. WE MUST THROW A PARTY!
YES. THIS MUST BE A SIDE EFFECT. LET ME REST TODAY. LET'S NOT HAVE A PARTY.
WHAT? YOU'RE UNWELL?
WAIT. OH... I DON'T FEEL SO WELL. IS THIS BECAUSE I TOOK THE HEART?

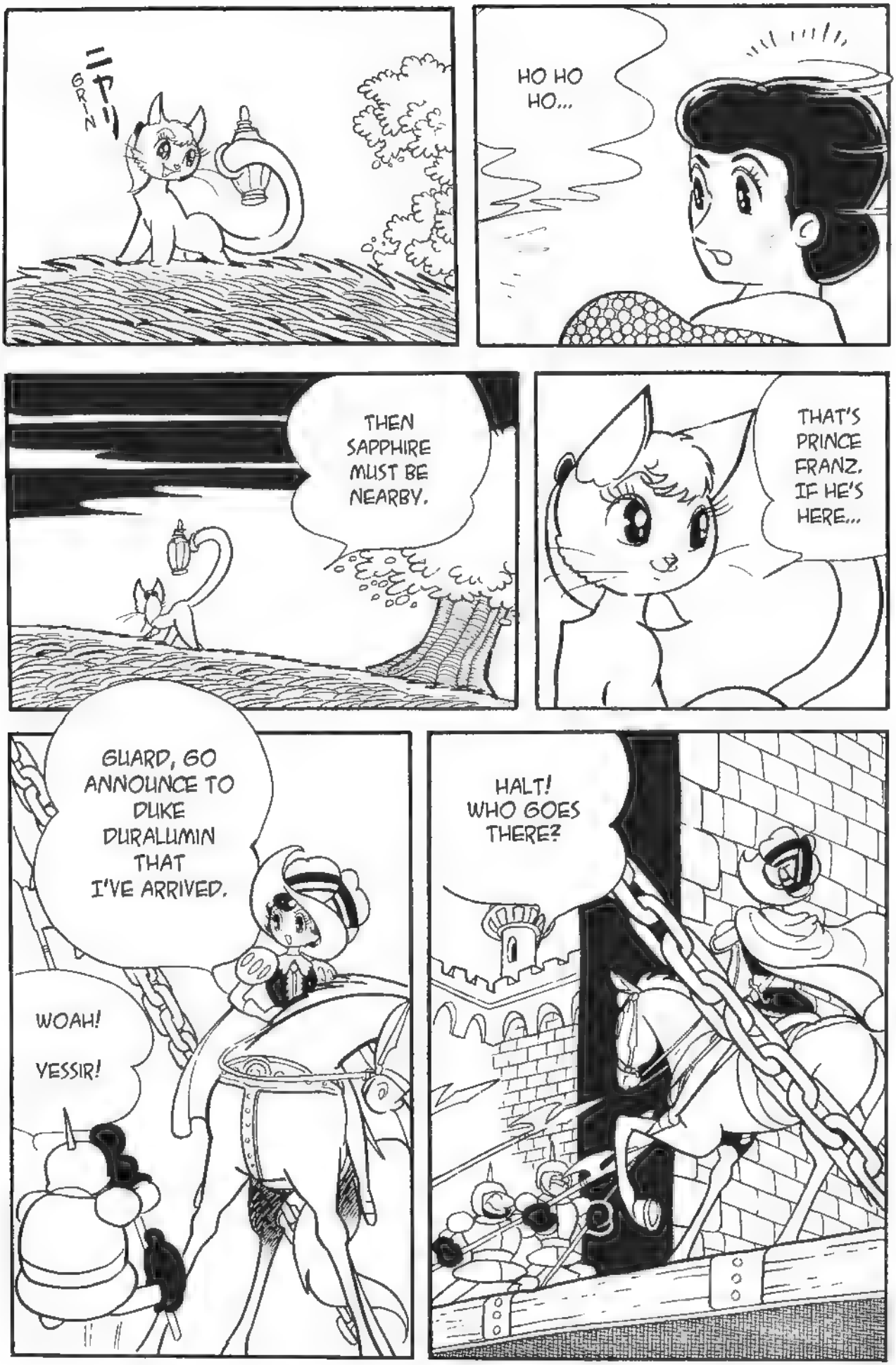
NO, I'LL BE FINE IF I REST ALL DAY TODAY.
OH, DEAR. I DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT ANY SIDE EFFECTS. DO YOU NEED TO DETOXIFY?
JUST PROMISE ME YOU WON'T COME INTO MY ROOM, OK?
WHEW!
GET THEE HENCE, DRESS! ASSUME MY SLEEPING FORM UPON THE BED!
GOTTA TRANSFORM.
NOW IT'S MY TURN.

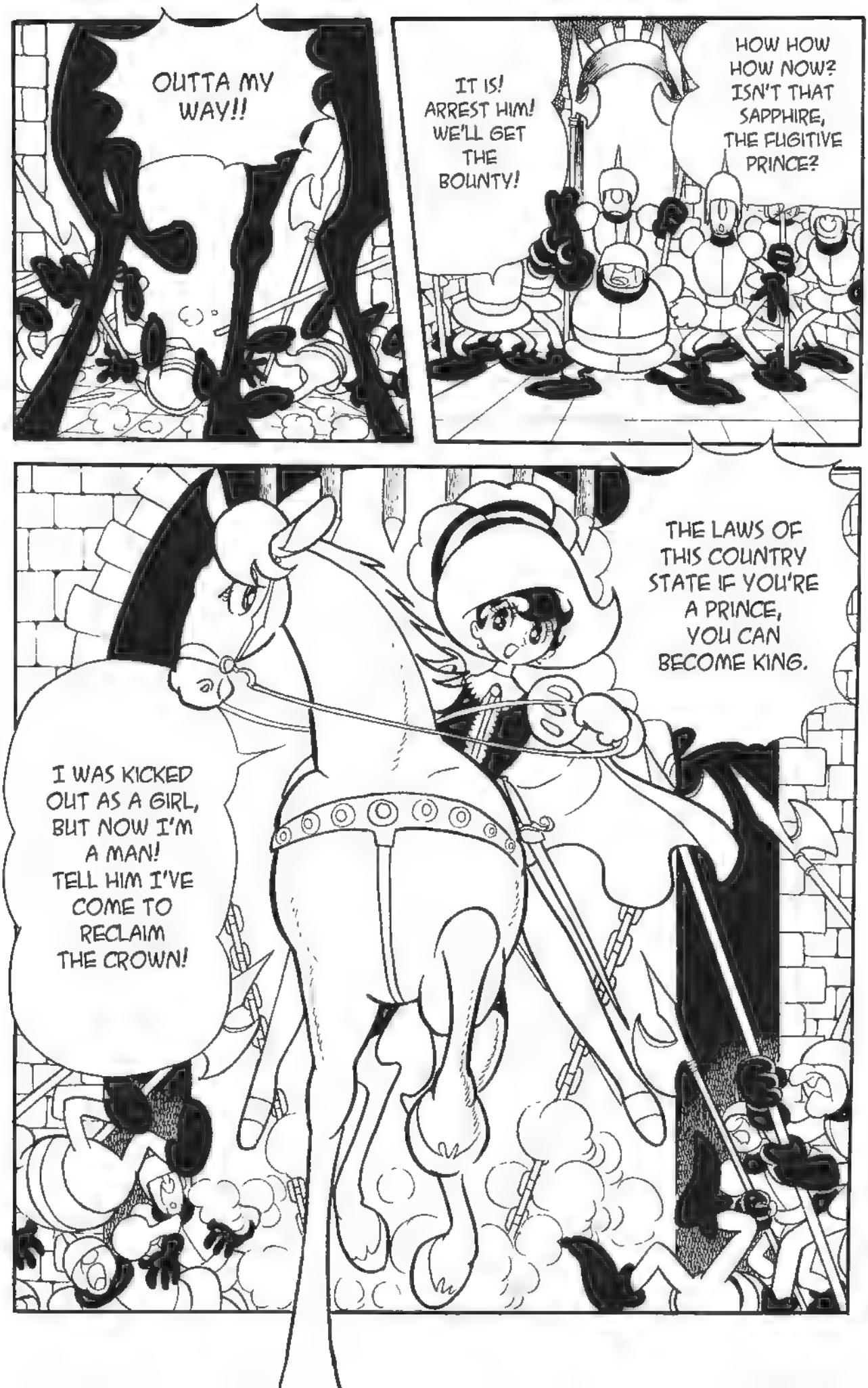
PURRFECT!
SHAPE-SHIFT! A WHITE CAT WITH A LONG TAIL!
SORRY, MOTHER, BUT I SIMPLY MUST GIVE THIS HEART BACK TO SAPPHIRE!
GRRR...
RUFF.
KNOCK IT OFF, DUMB WOLVES! IT'S ME, HECATE!

SAPPHIRE, SAPPHIRE! WAIT FOR ME!
WHINE
EXACTLY HOW FAR ARE YOU GOING TO FOLLOW ME?
PRINCE FRANZ, WHAT BUSINESS DO YOU HAVE WITH ME?
SINCE YOUR TRUE NATURE REMAINS A MYSTERY.
BUSINESS? I INTEND TO KEEP A WATCHFUL EYE ON YOU...

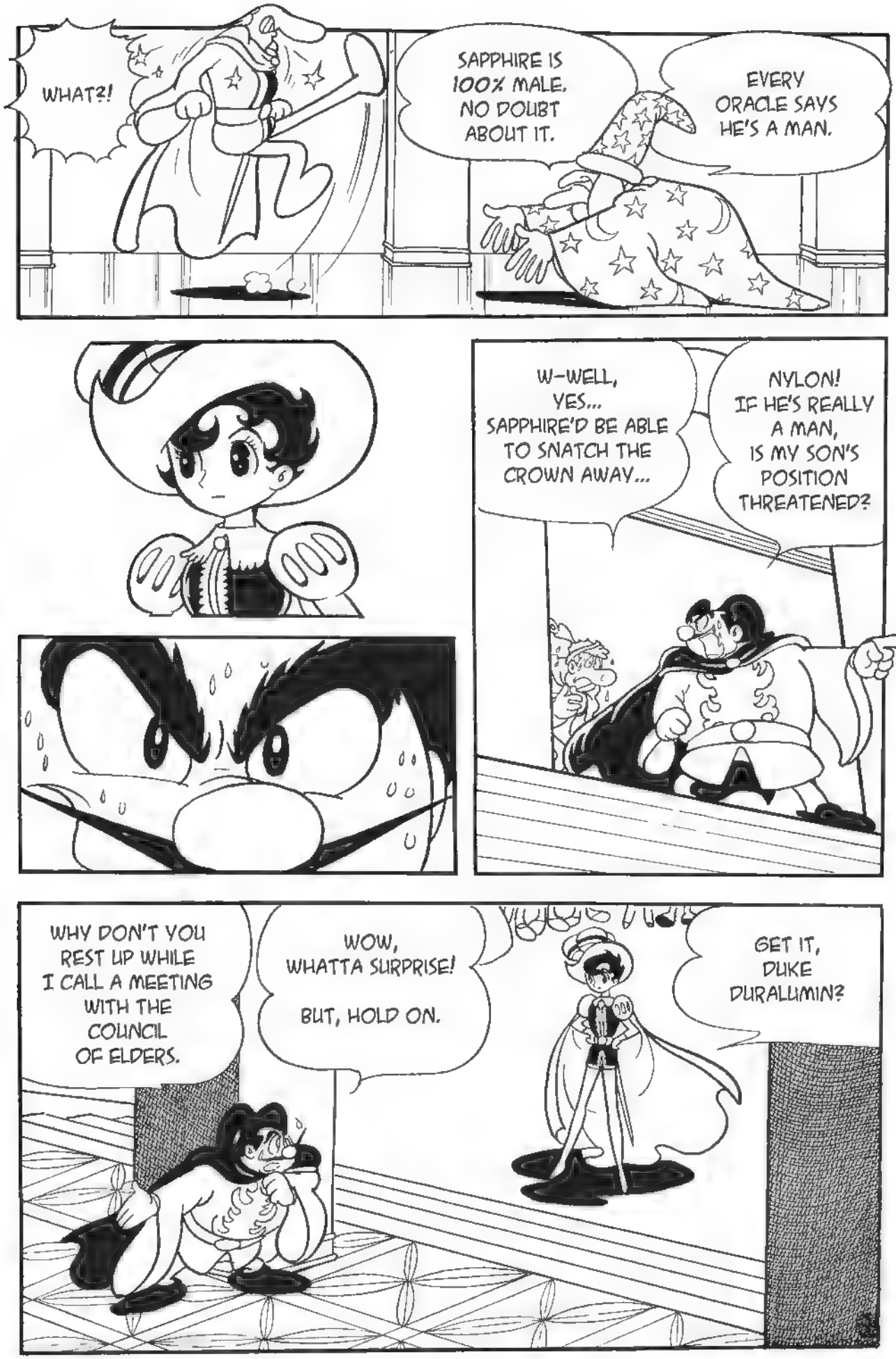

BUT I'LL RUSH TO YOUR SIDE WHENEVER YOU'RE IN NEED.
FINE, IF THAT'S HOW YOU'RE GOING TO BE.
LEAVE ME ALONE! GO BACK TO YOUR OWN COUNTRY!
WHO'S THERE!

HEH HEH! PRINCE FRANZ, RIGHT? HOW VERY NICE TO SEE YOU AGAIN.
YOU! YOU WERE TAILING SAPPHIRE, TOO?
WHY DID SHE SUDDENLY BECOME MASCULINE IN THE FOREST?
WHICH DO YOU THINK SAPPHIRE IS— MAN OR WOMAN?
I WANT TO FIND OUT.
HEH. AND WHY'RE YOU FOLLOWING SAPPHIRE?
YUP.
LISTEN, FILTH ...
FOLLOW HER?!
UNTIL I KNOW WHY, I WILL—
IF YOU GET TOO CLOSE TO SAPPHIRE, YOU'LL HAVE TO ANSWER TO MY SWORD!
THAT'S MY LINE.

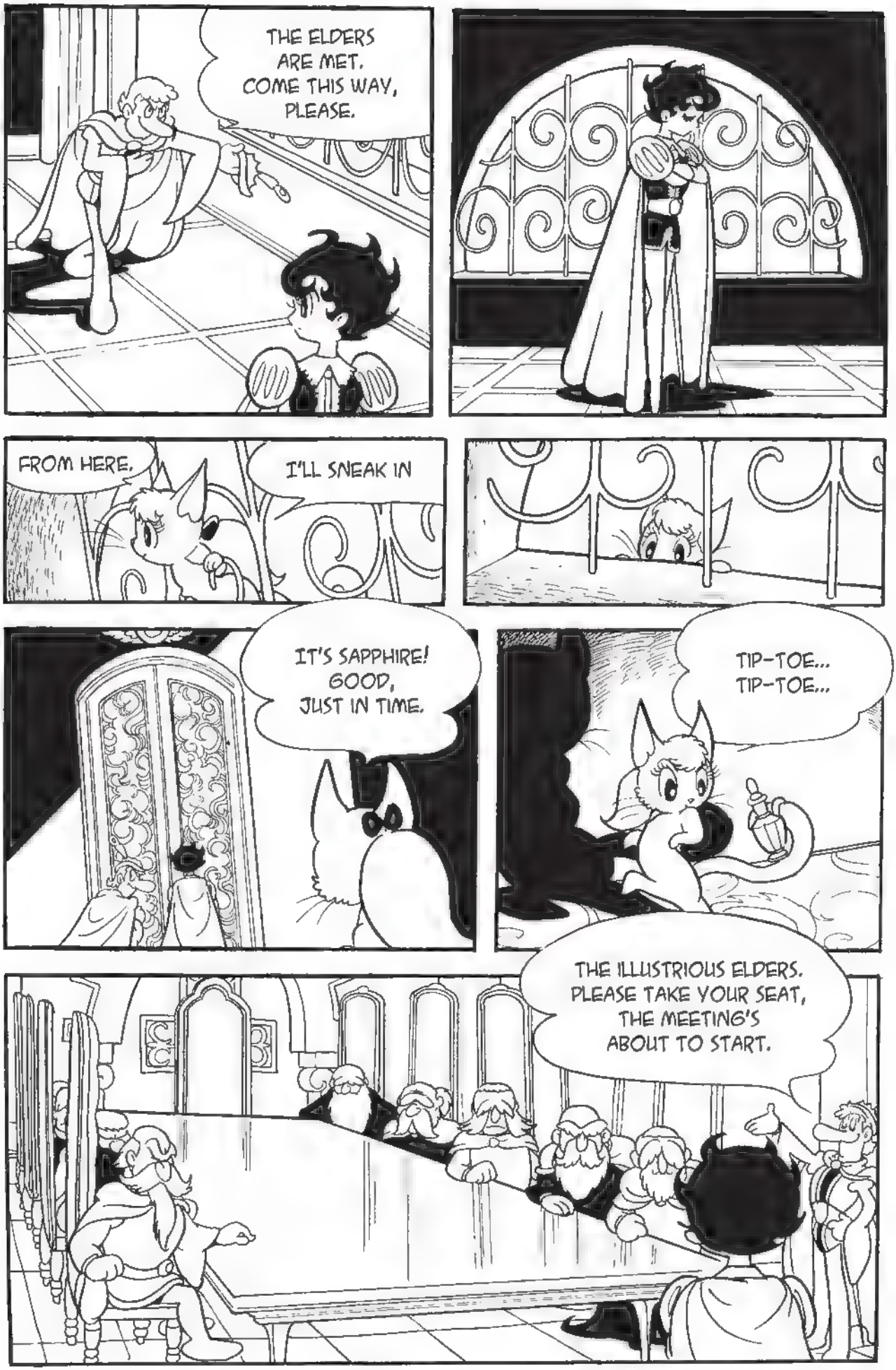

GRIN
HO HO HO...
THEN SAPPHIRE MUST BE NEARBY.
THAT'S PRINCE FRANZ. IF HE'S HERE...
GUARD, GO ANNOUNCE TO DUKE DURALUMIN THAT I'VE ARRIVED.
WOAH!
YESSIR!
HALT! WHO GOES THERE?


OUTTA MY WAY!!
HOW HOW HOW NOW? ISN'T THAT SAPPHIRE, THE FUGITIVE PRINCE?
IT IS! ARREST HIM! WE'LL GET THE BOUNTY!
THE LAWS OF THIS COUNTRY STATE IF YOU'RE A PRINCE, YOU CAN BECOME KING.
I WAS KICKED OUT AS A GIRL, BUT NOW I'M A MAN! TELL HIM I'VE COME TO RECLAIM THE CROWN!

YOU WERE BANISHED! YOU'VE GOT SOME NERVE STORMING BACK INTO THE CASTLE!
YOU'RE A MAN? HA! HOW COULD SUCH A MIRACLE OCCUR?
SHOCKING!
OH, WOW.
REALLY?
A WITCH TOOK OUT MY GIRL HEART IN THE HAWTHORN FOREST. I WAS BORN WITH BOTH A GIRL AND A BOY HEART, BUT SINCE THAT INCIDENT I'M FULLY MALE.
TELL ME WHETHER THAT'S A GIRL OR A BOY!
SOOTHSAYERS!
LIAR! LIAR! GIRLY PANTS ON FIRE! I'VE GOT PROOF!
MO!
MINEY
MEENIE


WHAT?!
SAPPHIRE IS 100% MALE, NO DOUBT ABOUT IT.
EVERY ORACLE SAYS HE'S A MAN.
W-WELL, YES... SAPPHIRE'D BE ABLE TO SNATCH THE CROWN AWAY...
NYLON! IF HE'S REALLY A MAN, IS MY SON'S POSITION THREATENED?
WHY DON'T YOU REST UP WHILE I CALL A MEETING WITH THE COUNCIL OF ELDERS.
WOW, WHATTA SURPRISE!
BUT, HOLD ON.
GET IT, DUKE DURALUMIN?

SON!!
ARRGH!
YOU FINALLY BECAME KING, YET SAPPHIRE'S NOW A MAN. EVERYTHING'S RUINED!
O SON, MY SON... BAD NEWS!
WHAT'S UP, DADDY— ER, DEAR FATHER?
YA MEAN I DON'T GOTTA BE KING NO MORE? YIPPEE! YAAY!
ALL THE SACRIFICES I MADE TO GET YOU ON THE THRONE WERE FOR NAUGHT!
LET'S FIGURE OUT HOW TO KEEP 'EM QUIET.
DUKE, GOOD NEWS. ONLY A FEW COURTIERS KNOW THAT SAPPHIRE'S RETURNED.
OH, YOU SORRY IDIOT! THIS IS HOW YOU ACT WHEN I'M SUFFERING FOR YOU?


THE ELDERS ARE MET. COME THIS WAY, PLEASE.
FROM HERE.
I'LL SNEAK IN
IT'S SAPPHIRE! GOOD, JUST IN TIME.
TIP-TOE... TIP-TOE...
THE ILLUSTRIOUS ELDERS. PLEASE TAKE YOUR SEAT, THE MEETING'S ABOUT TO START.

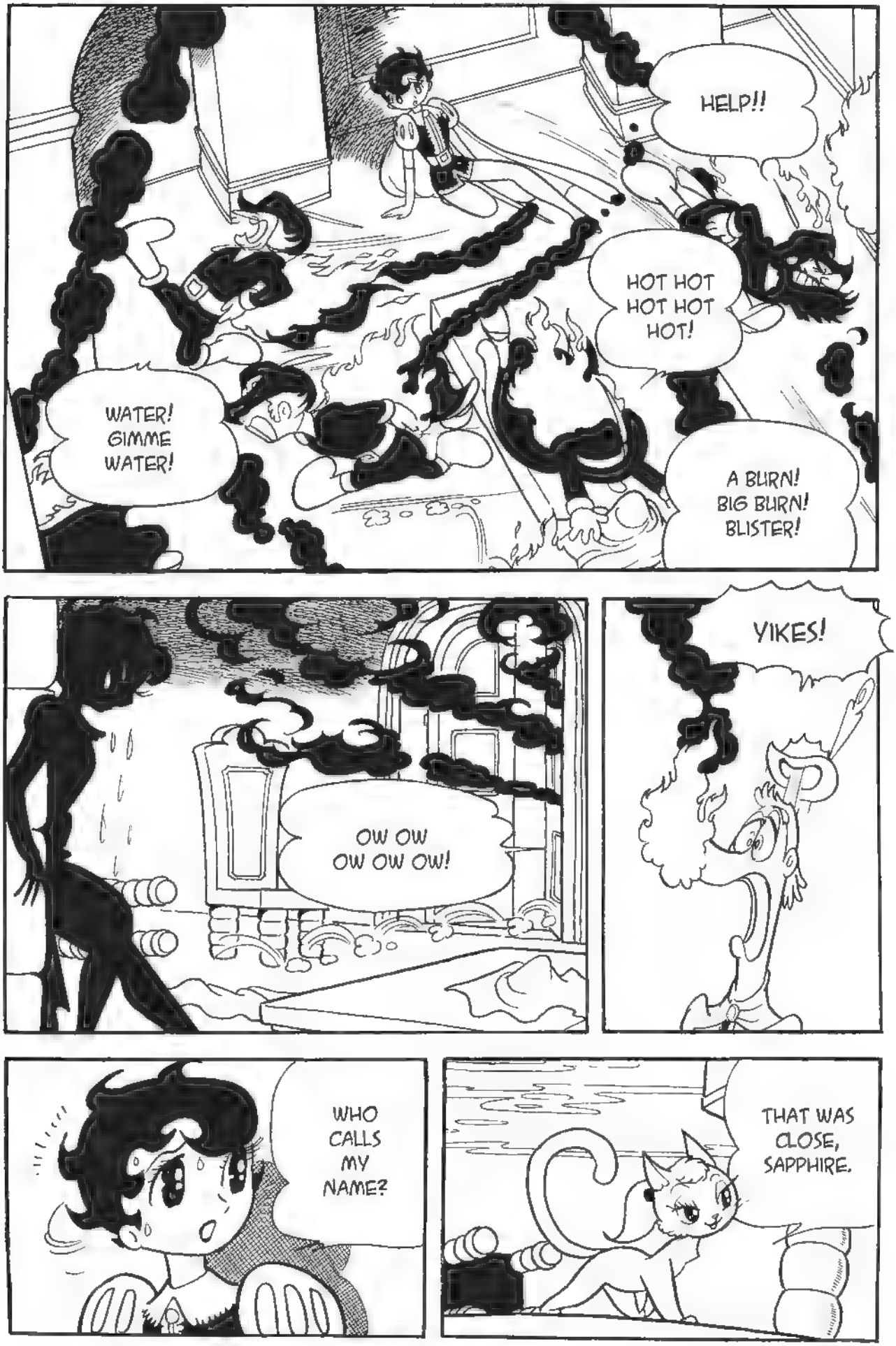
ACK!
DO THE ELDERS ACCEPT PRINCE SAPPHIRE AS KING?

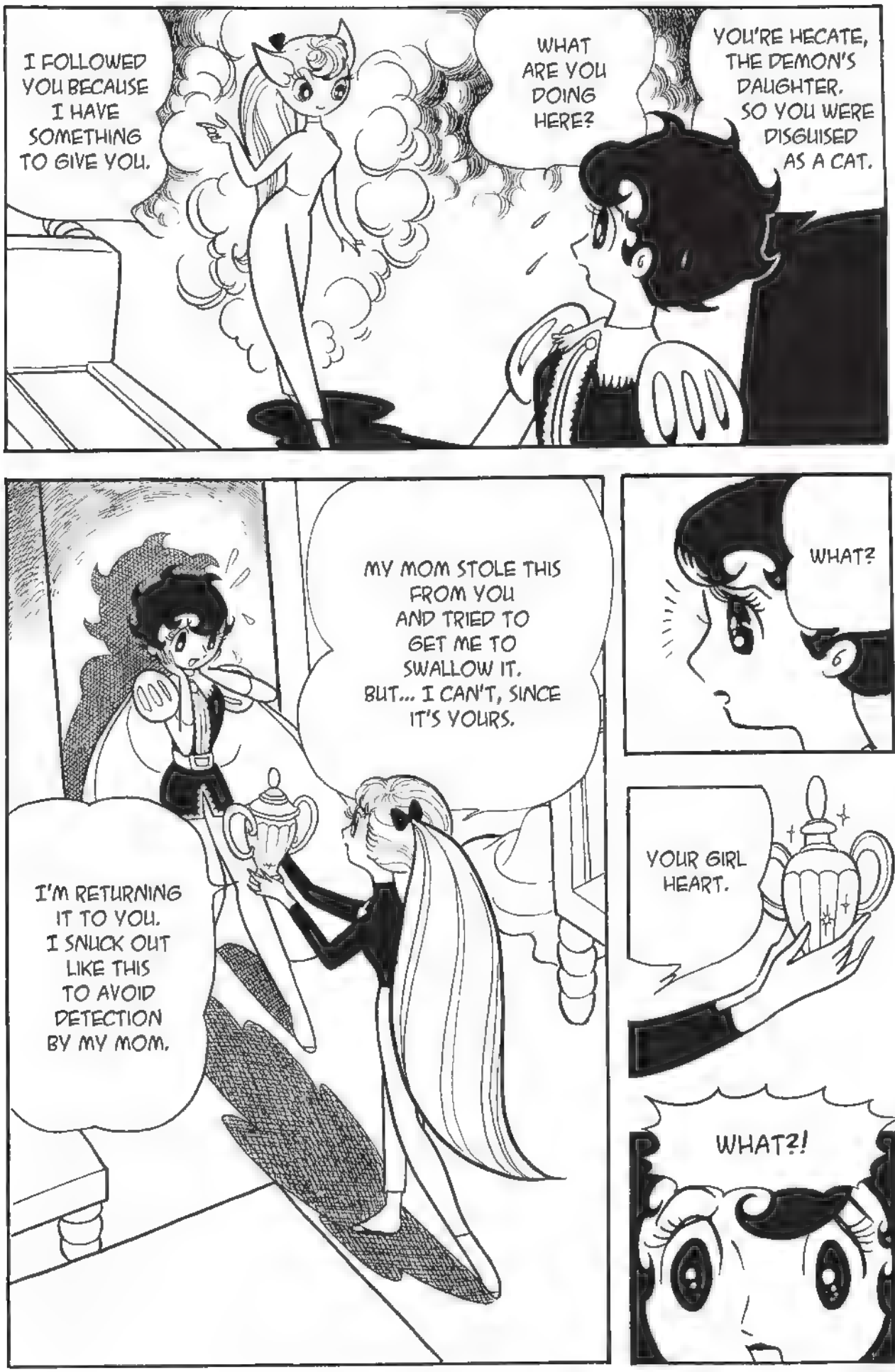
HEH HEH HEH. YOU THOUGHT WE WERE THE ELDERS? YOU'RE STILL A DUMB KID.
NOW THEN!
AS ELDERS OF THIS COURT, HOW DARE YOU...

SO YOU TRICKED ME, EH, NYLON?
UNDER OUR GUISES WE'RE JUST ASSASSINS!
AS IF WE'D BOTHER WITH THE TROUBLE OF LETTING YOU ASCEND THE THRONE!
YOU'RE THE YELLOWEST COWARD ON EARTH!
AH!!
YAAH!
WOOSH

HEH HEH HEH,
NO ONE WILL EVER
KNOW YOU CAME
HERE TO DIE.
RIP
AAH!!
AHA
HA HA!

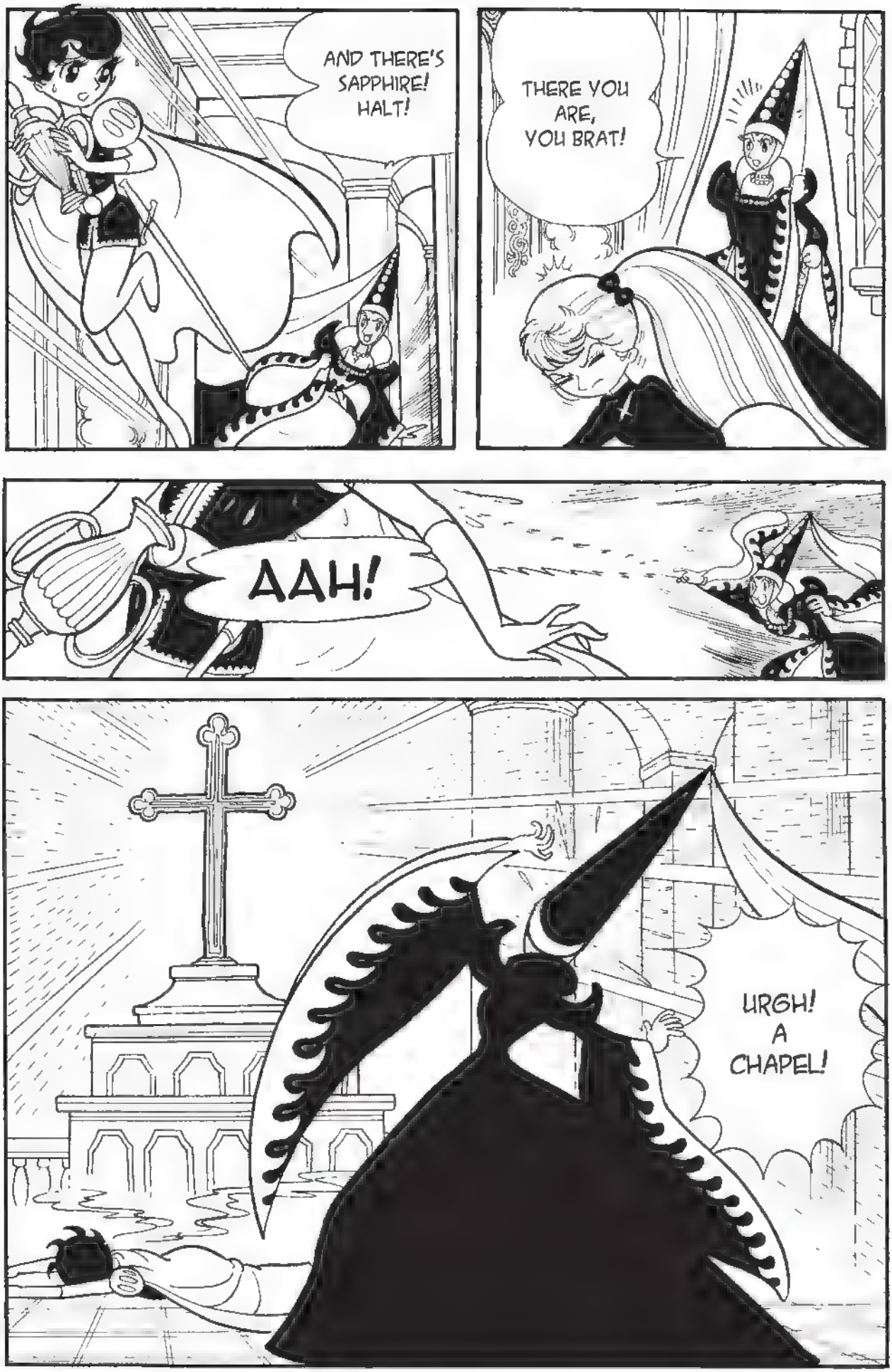
LEAP
OH, NO! SAPPHIRE'LL BE KILLED!
WHOOO
HOT HOT HOT!
YIPE!

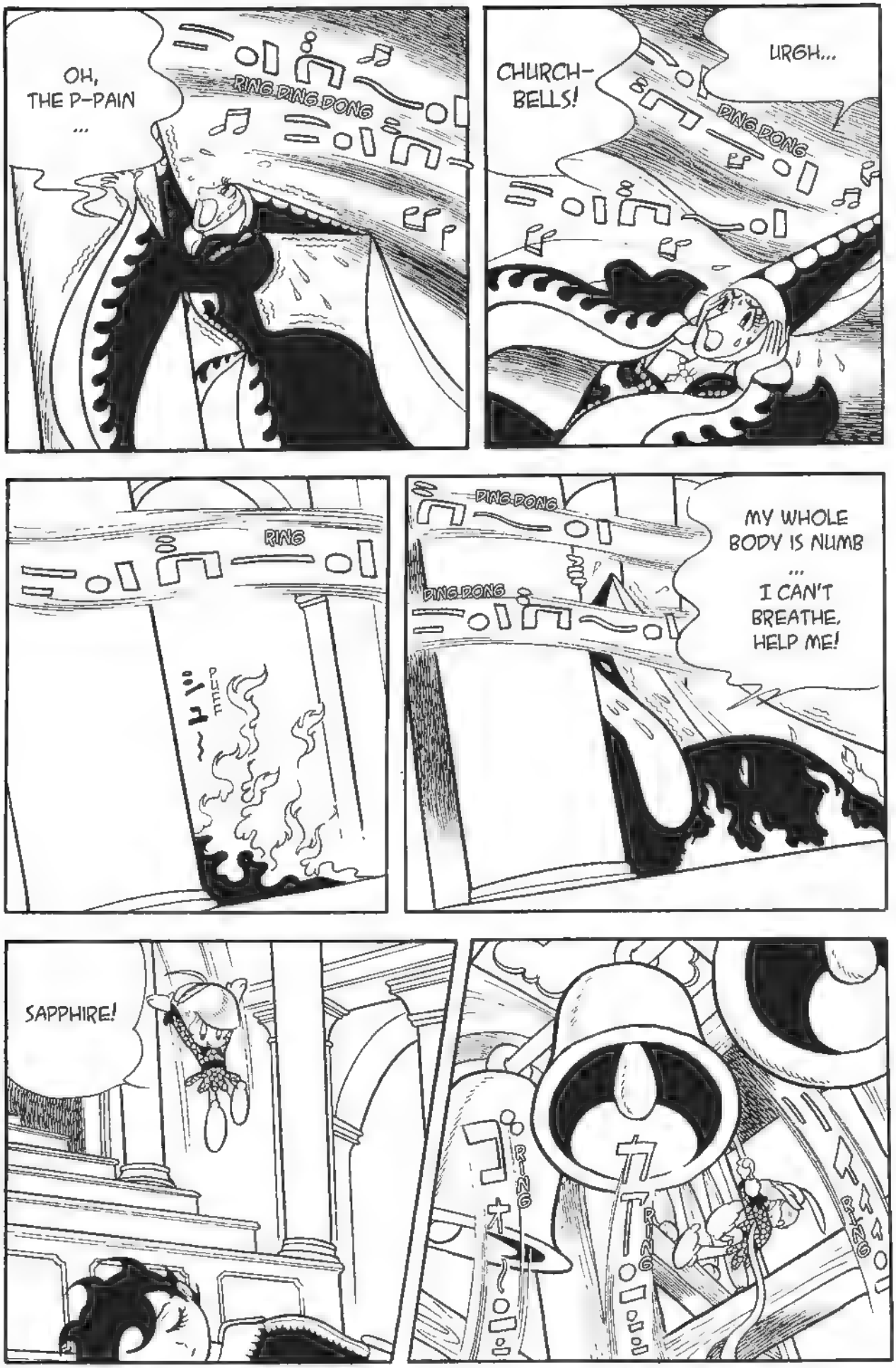

HELP!!
HOT HOT HOT HOT HOT!
WATER! GIMME WATER!
A BURN! BIG BURN! BLISTER!
OW OW OW OW OW!
YIKES!
WHO CALLS MY NAME?
THAT WAS CLOSE, SAPPHIRE.


I FOLLOWED YOU BECAUSE I HAVE SOMETHING TO GIVE YOU.
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
YOU'RE HECATE, THE DEMON'S DAUGHTER. SO YOU WERE DISGUISED AS A CAT.
MY MOM STOLE THIS FROM YOU AND TRIED TO GET ME TO SWALLOW IT. BUT... I CAN'T, SINCE IT'S YOURS.
I'M RETURNING IT TO YOU. I SNUCK OUT LIKE THIS TO AVOID DETECTION BY MY MOM.
WHAT?
YOUR GIRL HEART.
WHAT?!

RIDICULOUS! WHY WOULD I WANT SUCH A THING?
DON'T SQUANDER MY GOODWILL. HURRY UP AND TAKE IT!
I'VE FINALLY BECOME A MAN. THAT'S WHY I RETURNED TO THE CASTLE, TO RECLAIM MY RIGHT TO THE THRONE...
WHY NOT? YOU CAN GO BACK TO BEING A LOVELY GIRL.
BUT IT'S YOURS. I DON'T NEED IT. I'M A WITCH'S DAUGHTER, AFTER ALL.
YOU CAN KEEP THAT HEART.
WHAT'LL HAPPEN TO ME?
IF I GO BACK TO BEING A GIRL,

SHE REALIZED I SNUCK OUT!
SOMEONE'S COMING... HURRY!
OH, NO! IT'S MOM!
HECATE, HECATE, WHERE ARE YOU?! WHY DID YOU TRICK ME AND RUN AWAY? YOU'RE GOING TO PAY FOR IT WHEN I FIND YOU!

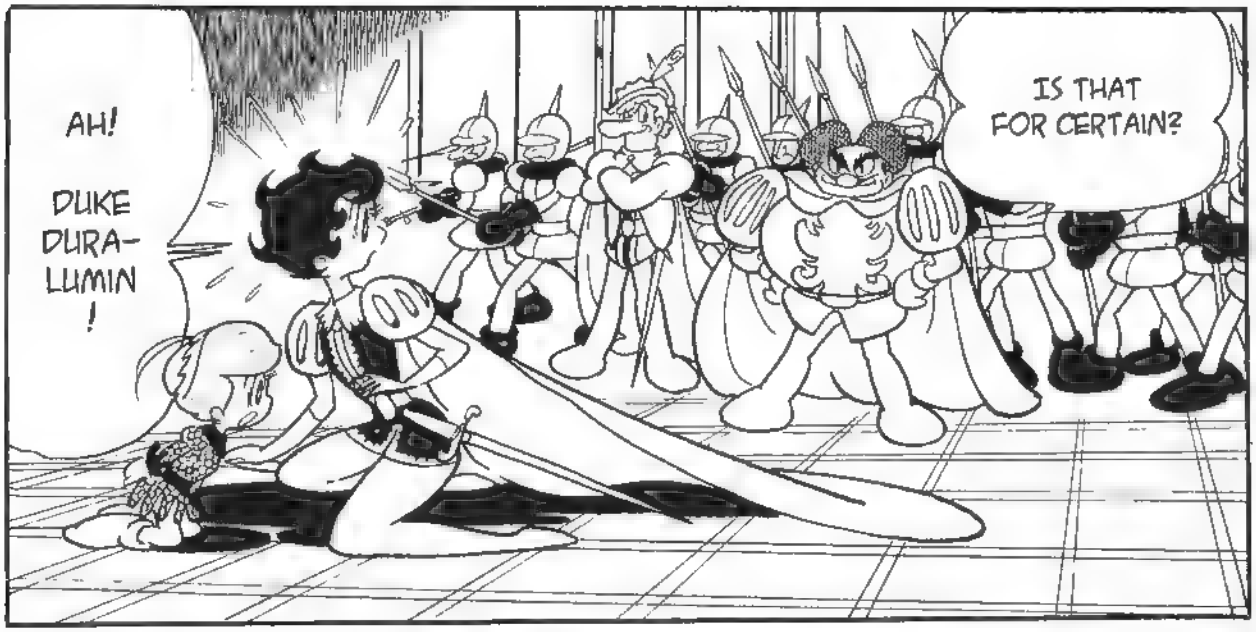

AND THERE'S SAPPHIRE! HALT!
THERE YOU ARE, YOU BRAT!
AAH!
URGH! A CHAPEL!


OH, THE P-PAIN ...
RING DING DONG
CHURCH-BELLS!
URGH...
DING DONG
RING
DING DONG
DING DONG
MY WHOLE BODY IS NUMB ... I CAN'T BREATHE. HELP ME!
SAPPHIRE!
RING
RING
RING

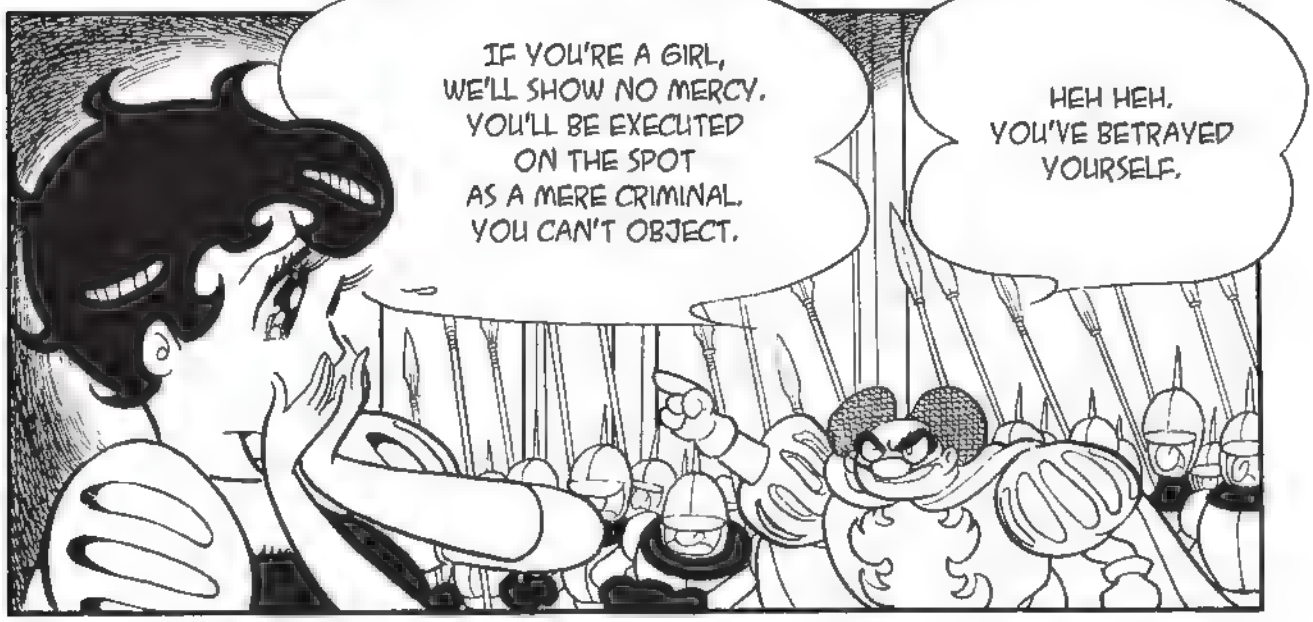
HMM? WHAT'S THAT?
IT'S ME, TINK! I GOT RID OF THE DEMON! PLEASE OPEN YOUR EYES!
WHY DOES SAPPHIRE HAVE A GIRL HEART? I KNOW, I'LL USE THIS TO SWITCH OUT HER BOY HEART!
A GIRL HEART!
NOW, HOW DO I REMOVE HER BOY HEART?

I'M THE KING. I'M SPECIAL. SO LEMME SEE.
CAN I SEE?
AH!
THERE IT IS! A BOY HEART!
NO! GIVE IT BACK!
HA HA HA! GOT IT!
I SAID GIMME THE HEART! I'LL CALL MY GUARDS!
YOU'RE THE IDIOT KING OF SILVERLAND, PLASTIC, RIGHT?
NO! DON'T EAT IT!
I DON'T UNDERSTAND. CAN YOU EAT IT?
IT'S A BOY HEART! IT MAKES PEOPLE STRONG AND BRAVE!
TELL ME WHAT IT IS AND I'LL GIVE IT BACK.

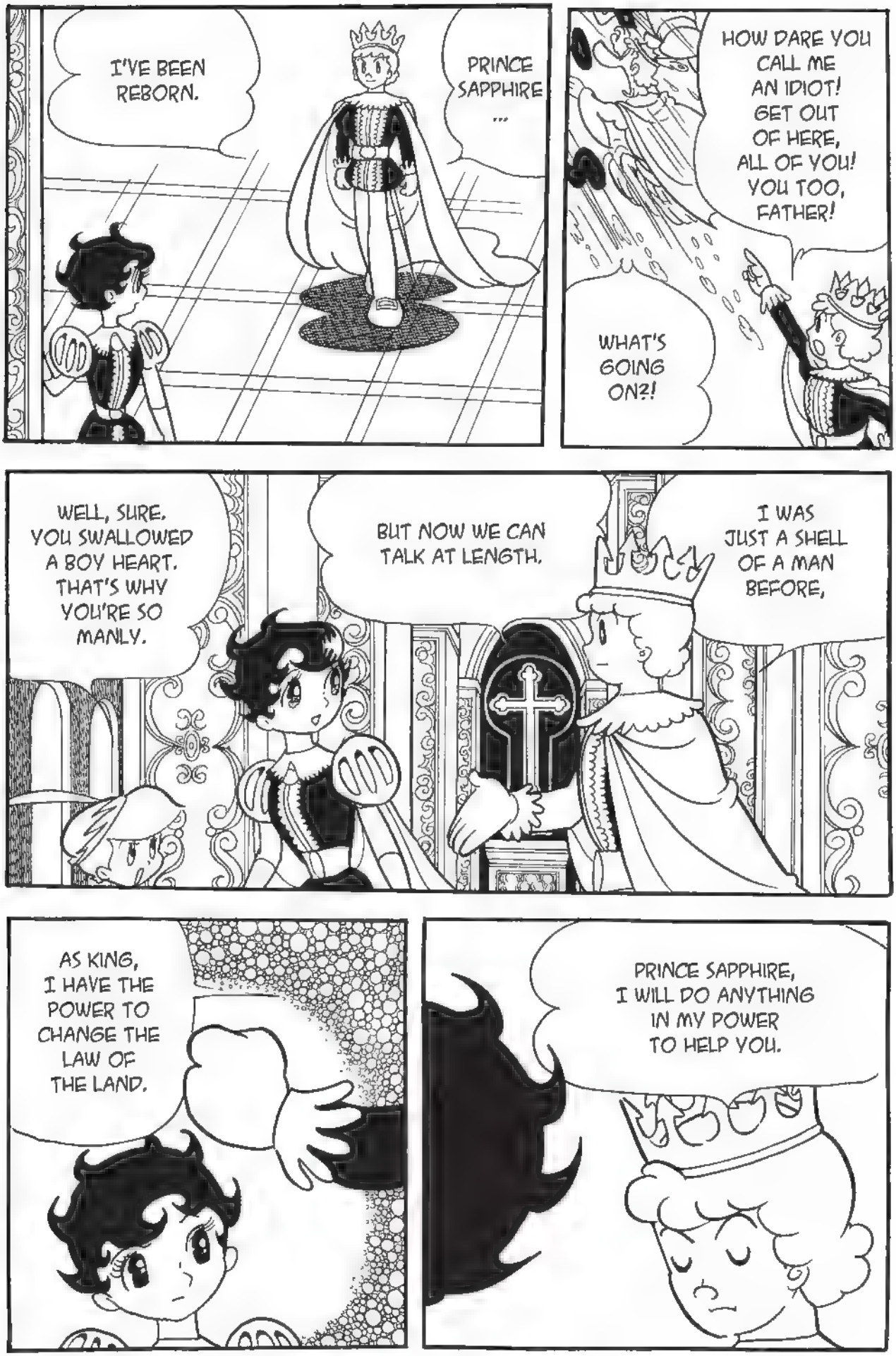
OH, GREAT. WHAT A MESS!
YAHOO!
ゴクン
GULP
BUT AT LEAST HE DIDN'T EAT SAPPHIRE'S GIRL HEART.
HOW DO YOU FEEL? BETTER?
OH? WHERE AM I?
THAT'S BECAUSE YOU ARE A GIRL NOW.
I FEEL STRANGE, LIKE I'M A WEAK GIRL. ALL OF MY STRENGTH SEEMS TO HAVE DRAINED OUT OF MY BODY.
TINK!

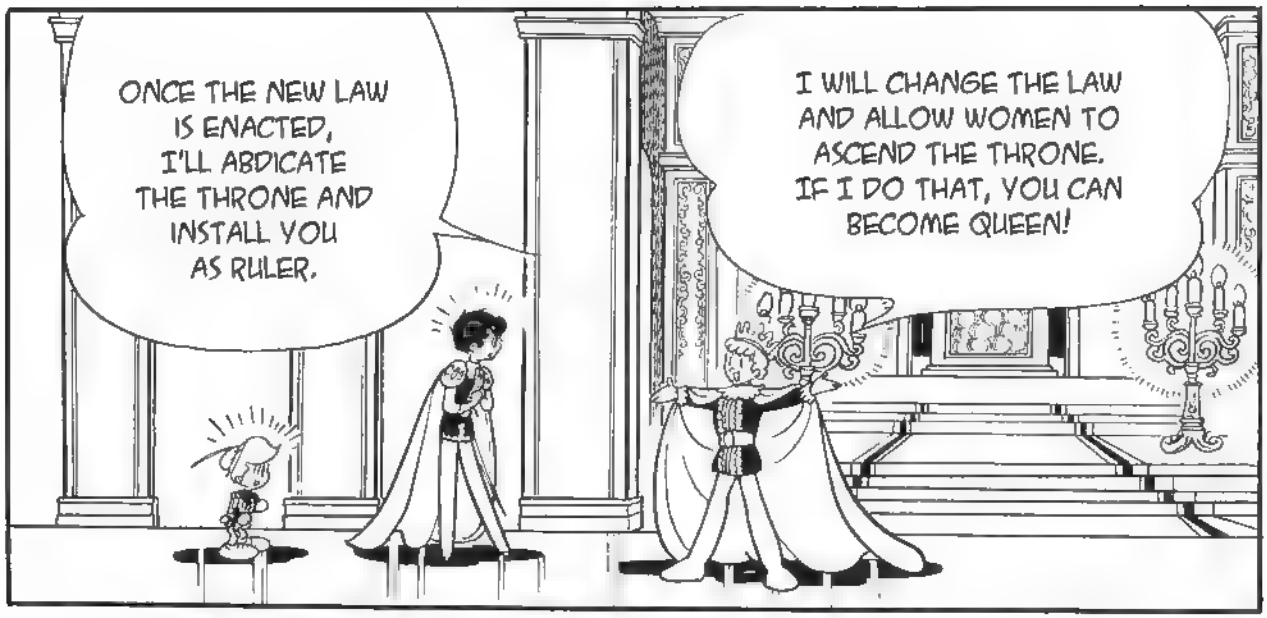

AH!
DUKE DURA-LUMIN!
IS THAT FOR CERTAIN?

ME? A GIRL? HOW CAN YOU SAY THAT TO THIS PRETTY PRINCE SAPPHIRE?
I WAS STUMPED SINCE IT WAS NEVER CLEAR WHICH YOU WERE, BUT THAT KID JUST SAID YOU'RE A GIRL. THANKS, CHUMP.


IF YOU'RE A GIRL, WE'LL SHOW NO MERCY. YOU'LL BE EXECUTED ON THE SPOT AS A MERE CRIMINAL. YOU CAN'T OBJECT.
HEH HEH. YOU'VE BETRAYED YOURSELF.

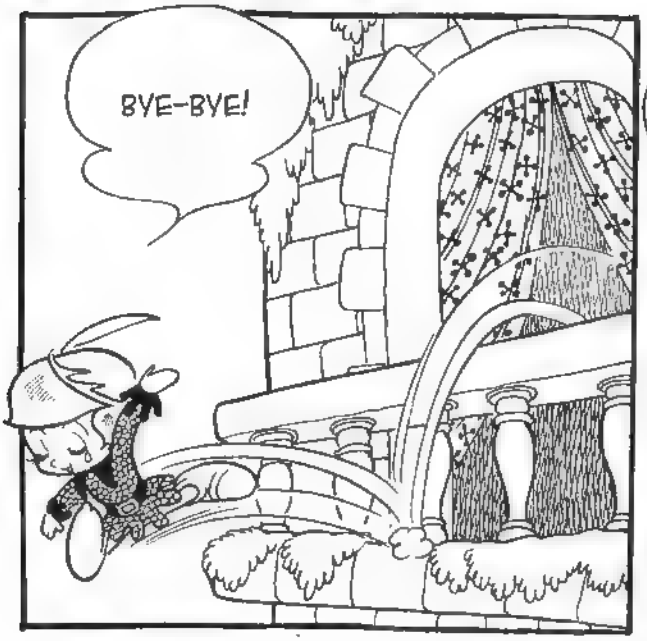
WITHDRAW, GUARDS! I WILL GIVE ALL ORDERS CONCERNING SIR SAPPHIRE! STAND DOWN, I SAY!
HE'S TOTALLY CHANGED! A MIRACLE!
P-PLASTIC! I CAN'T BELIEVE SUCH WORDS COULD COME FROM THE IDIOT KING.
ONLY THE KING CAN GIVE ORDERS HERE. YOU'RE NOT THE KING, AND SINCE I'M THE KING THEN—
OUTTA MY WAY, PLASTIC. I'M THE ONE WHO GAVE A DECREE...

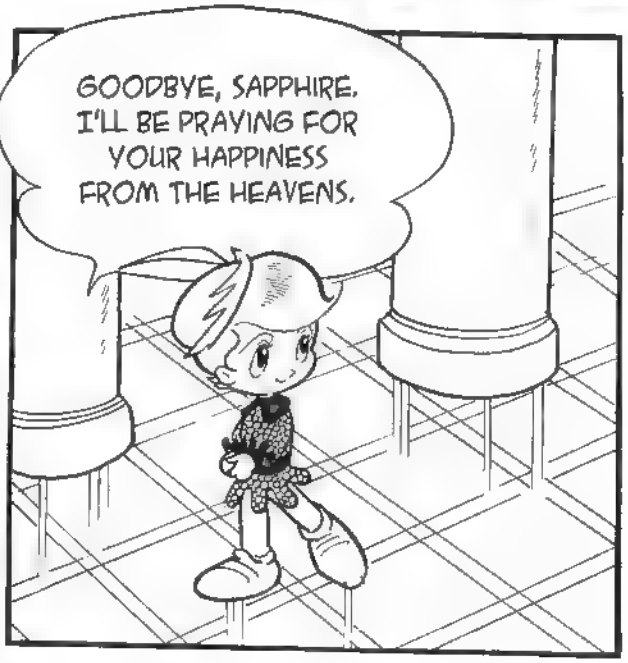

I'VE BEEN REBORN.
PRINCE SAPPHIRE ...
HOW DARE YOU CALL ME AN IDIOT! GET OUT OF HERE, ALL OF YOU! YOU TOO, FATHER!
WHAT'S GOING ON?!
WELL, SURE. YOU SWALLOWED A BOY HEART. THAT'S WHY YOU'RE SO MANLY.
BUT NOW WE CAN TALK AT LENGTH.
I WAS JUST A SHELL OF A MAN BEFORE,
AS KING, I HAVE THE POWER TO CHANGE THE LAW OF THE LAND.
PRINCE SAPPHIRE, I WILL DO ANYTHING IN MY POWER TO HELP YOU.


ONCE THE NEW LAW IS ENACTED, I'LL ABDICATE THE THRONE AND INSTALL YOU AS RULER.
I WILL CHANGE THE LAW AND ALLOW WOMEN TO ASCEND THE THRONE. IF I DO THAT, YOU CAN BECOME QUEEN!

PRINCE SAPPHIRE... THANK YOU!
PLASTIC!

IN EXCHANGE, WILL YOU FORGIVE MY FATHER'S CRIMES?


BYE-BYE!


GOODBYE, SAPPHIRE. I'LL BE PRAYING FOR YOUR HAPPINESS FROM THE HEAVENS.

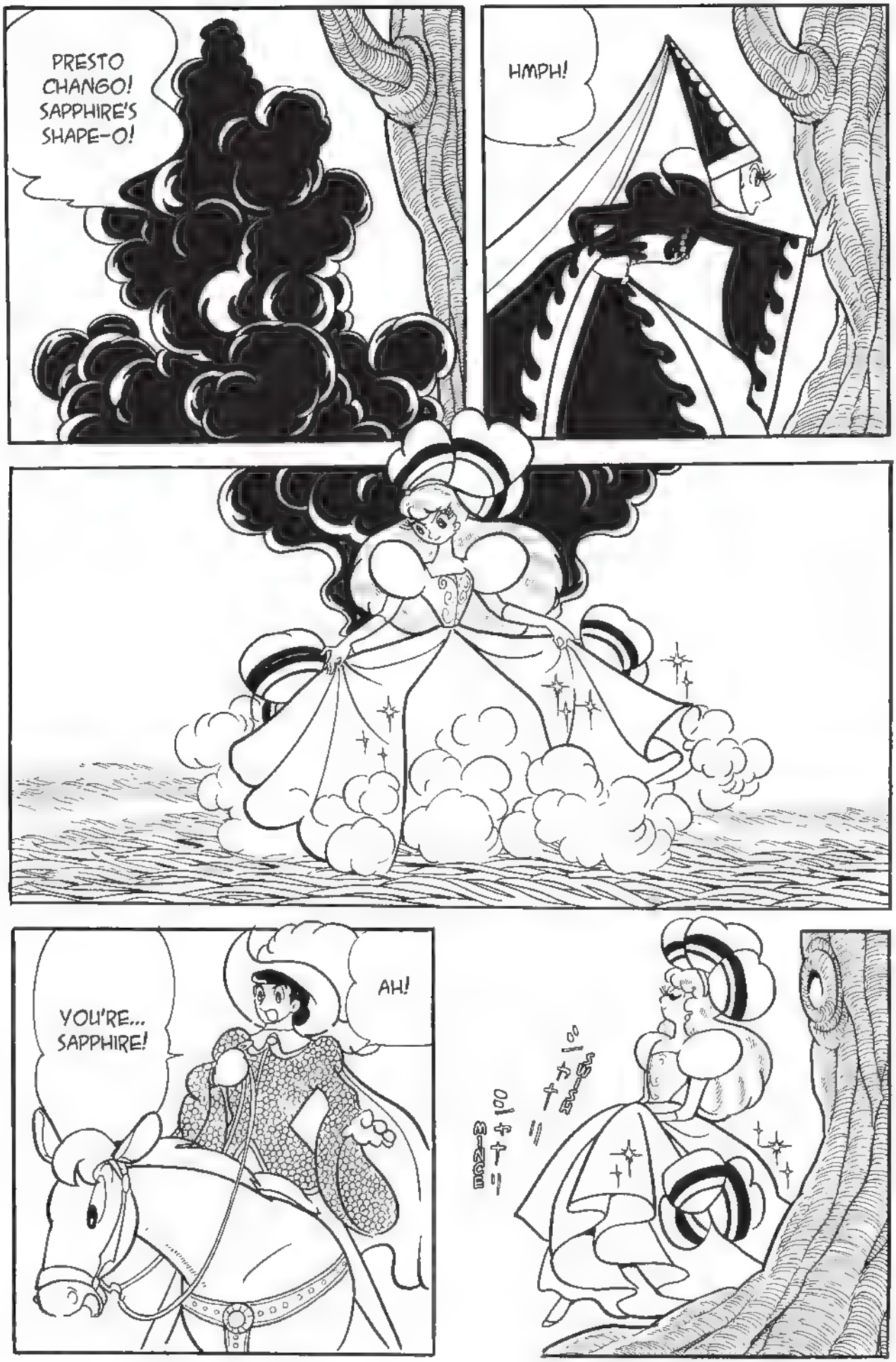
HEAVENLY FATHER, I'M COMING HOME!
OOPS!
AH!
FAREWELL, FLOWERS AND BIRDS OF THE LOVELY EARTH—
IF I DON'T DEFEAT THE WITCH, SAPPHIRE WILL NEVER BE AT PEACE.
I FORGOT ABOUT THE WITCH!
SORRY, FATHER, I NEED JUST A LI'L MORE TIME.

Chapter 19

Madame Hell's Demands

HOW FOOLISH OF ME TO RUN RIGHT INTO A CHAPEL.
UNH! OH, IT HURTS! "PANT" "PANT"
BWOM
OH, I'M FURIOUS! I'VE NEVER BEEN TREATED SO POORLY!
AND THAT HORRID LITTLE ANGEL, RINGING THOSE BELLS...

SOMEONE'S COMING!
OH ?
AH, HE MIGHT HAVE COME IN SEARCH OF SAPPHIRE.
IT'S GOLDLAND'S PRINCE FRANZ!
IF THEY WED, SAPPHIRE WILL BE QUEEN OF GOLDLAND! OH, THIS IS TERRIBLE. I MUST DO SOMETHING!
IT'S ALL OVER IF HE FINDS HER.

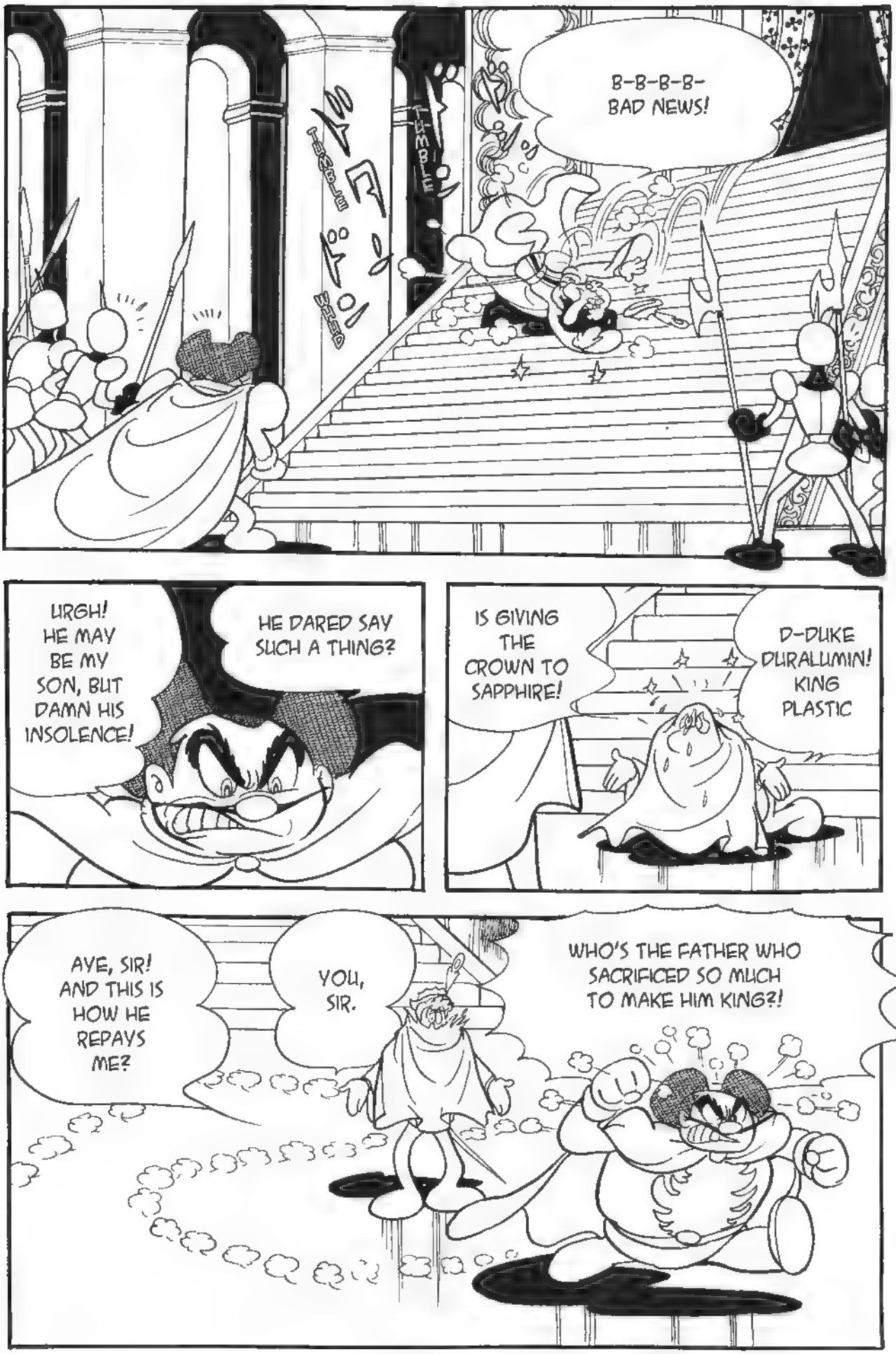

PRESTO CHANGO! SAPPHIRE'S SHAPE-O!
HMPH!
YOU'RE... SAPPHIRE!
AH!

HO HO HO! COME, CHASE AFTER ME! I'VE GOT A SURPRISE IN STORE!
WAIT, SAPPHIRE! WHY DO YOU FLEE ME!
HELLO!!
SAPPHIRE !

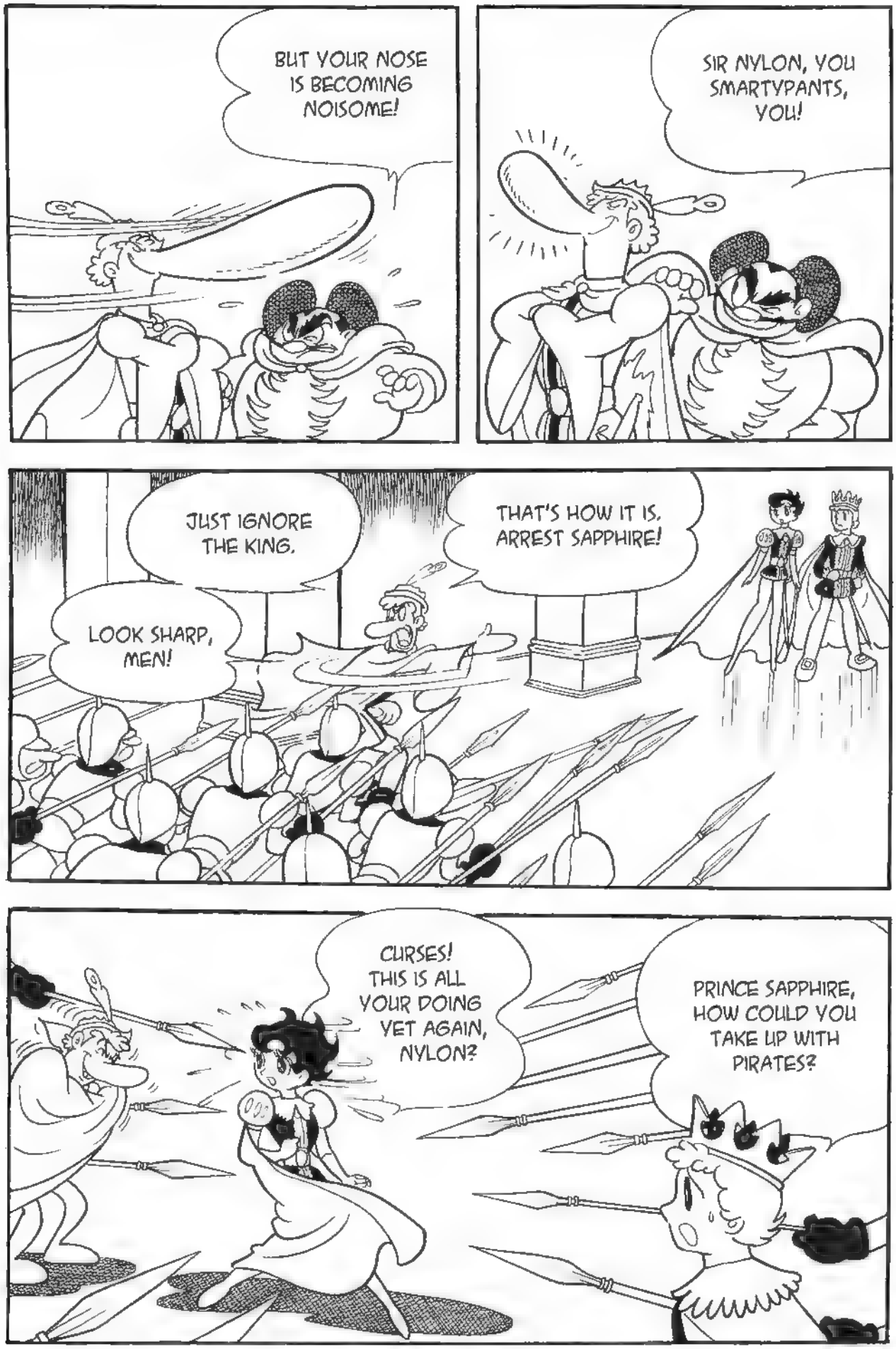
TRANSFORM, TREES!
OH? NEVER NOTICED THIS HOUSE BACK HERE. IS THAT WHERE SHE WENT?
PLEASE, MAKE YOURSELF COMFORTABLE. HO HO!
AAH!
WHO'S THERE?!
THE DOOR OPENED ON ITS OWN.
KREAK

YOU'RE THAT WITCH! WHAT HAVE YOU DONE WITH SAPPHIRE?
WHO? ME, THAT'S WHO.
HO HO HO! SAPPHIRE'S NOT HERE!
YOU DECEIVED ME!
URGH!
THE "SAPPHIRE" YOU SAW WAS ME!
IS THAT NONSENSE WHY YOU DRAGGED ME OUT HERE?
YOU MUST BE JOKING! WHO'D MARRY A WITCH'S DAUGHTER?
PRINCE FRANZ, PLEASE MAKE MY DAUGHTER HECATE YOUR QUEEN.

SAPPHIRE'S FATE DEPENDS ON YOUR DECISION IN THIS MATTER.
WHAT?!
FOOL! YOUR DAUGHTER SHOULD MARRY A TOAD OR A GOAT!
NONSENSE? IT'S THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IN THE WORLD TO A MOTHER.
IF YOU DON'T MARRY MY DAUGHTER, SAPPHIRE WILL DIE AT NOON TODAY. SHE WILL BE TRIED AND EXECUTED WITH THE DISHONORABLE LABEL OF "PIRATE."
YOU LIE! NO ONE WOULD BELIEVE SUCH UTTER CODSWALLOP!
HO HO HO! YOU FORGET THAT I'M A WITCH! I SEE ALL!


B-B-B-B-
BAD NEWS!
TUMBLE
URGH!
HE MAY BE MY SON, BUT DAMN HIS INSOLENCE!
HE DARED SAY SUCH A THING?
IS GIVING THE CROWN TO SAPPHIRE!
D-DUKE DURALUMIN! KING PLASTIC
AYE, SIR! AND THIS IS HOW HE REPAYS ME?
YOU, SIR.
WHO'S THE FATHER WHO SACRIFICED SO MUCH TO MAKE HIM KING?!

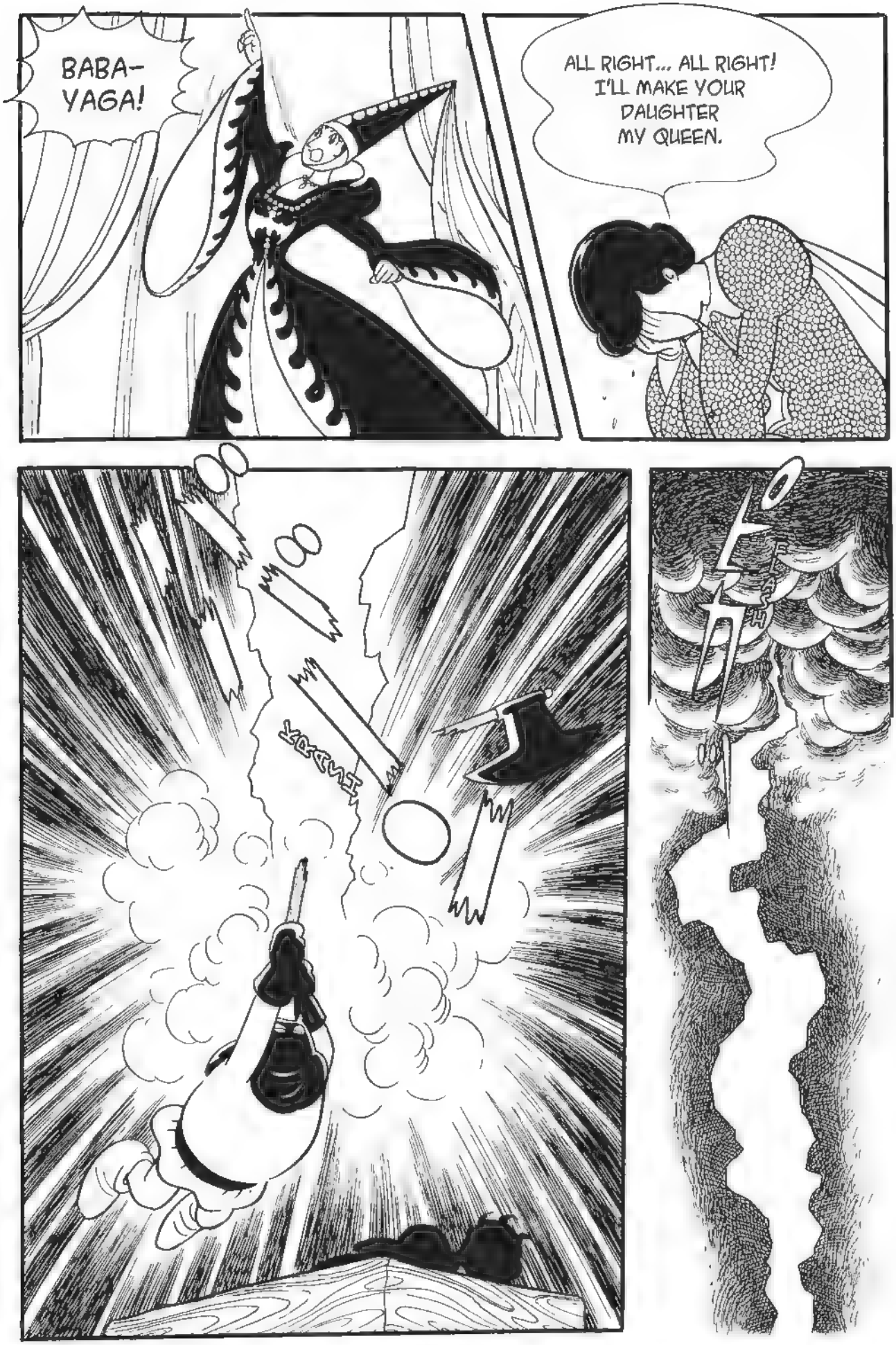
YOU HAVE? YOU'RE QUITE THE BRAIN, SIR NYLON. WHAT IS IT?
BUT I'VE THOUGHT OF AN EASY WAY TO GET RID OF SAPPHIRE.
ALL WE GOTTA DO IS SPREAD THE RUMOR THAT SAPPHIRE WAS PALLING AROUND WITH A LOWLY PIRATE CAPTAIN!
SAPPHIRE TEAMED UP WITH A PIRATE, CAPTAIN BLOOD, OR SOMETHING.
EVEN IF SAPPHIRE'S A PRINCE, HE TOOK UP WITH PIRATES. THAT MEANS PLASTIC'S POSITION AS KING IS SAFE. REST ASSURED.
ALL PIRATES ARE TO BE BEHEADED, ACCORDING TO LAW.
THEN NO ONE WILL DARE SIDE WITH SAPPHIRE.

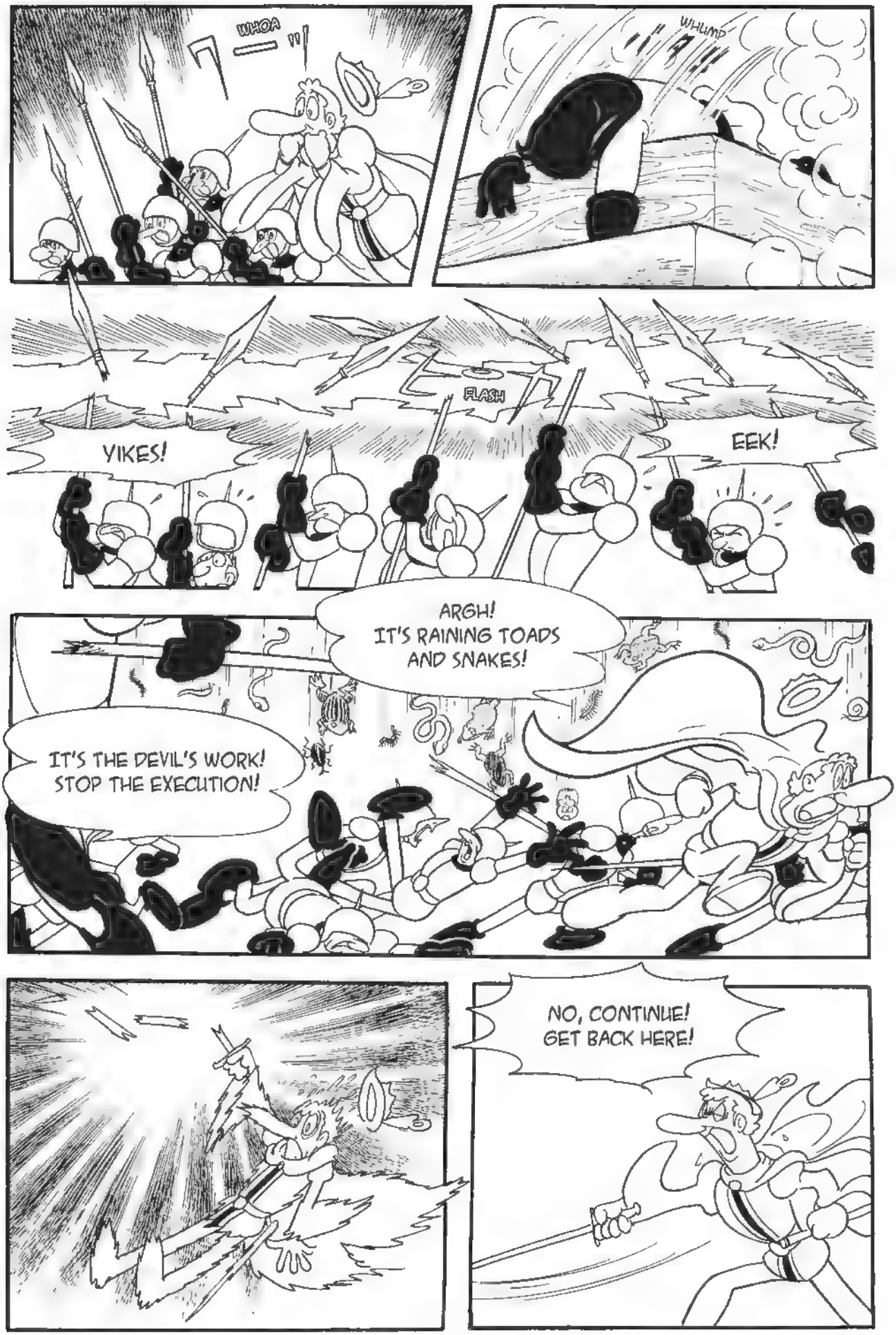

BUT YOUR NOSE IS BECOMING NOISOME!
SIR NYLON, YOU SMARTYPANTS, YOU!
JUST IGNORE THE KING.
THAT'S HOW IT IS. ARREST SAPPHIRE!
LOOK SHARP, MEN!
CURSES! THIS IS ALL YOUR DOING YET AGAIN, NYLON?
PRINCE SAPPHIRE, HOW COULD YOU TAKE UP WITH PIRATES?

BRING SAPPHIRE TO THE EXECUTIONER!
I'M NOT A PIRATE. I ONLY MET BLOOD ON HIS SHIP. AND YET, THEY ARRESTED ME.
O WOE IS ME! THERE IS NO HOPE! I ONLY WISH I COULD'VE SEEN MY MOTHER RELEASED FROM HER STONY SPELL! AND WHERE ARE YOU, FRANZ? I WANTED TO SEE YOU ONE LAST TIME...
YOU'LL BE BEHEADED RIGHT AT NOON. READY, EXECUTIONER?

DON'T BE BOSSY JUST BECAUSE YOUR PLAN WORKED.
GET ON UP THERE!
YOU'LL HARDLY FEEL A THING. PROMISE.
WOULD YOU BE SO KIND AS TO LIE DOWN HERE?
1 MINUTE 'TIL NOON!
I'VE KNOWN YOU SINCE YOU WERE A TYKE. WHAT STRANGE FATE THAT WE ENDED UP LIKE THIS.
GO ON. I'M READY.
NONE!
ANY LAST WORDS?

GOOD... BYE... MOTHER...
SEE? THE EXECUTION DRUMS HAVE STARTED. SAPPHIRE'S ABOUT TO BE EXECUTED!
TIME'S UP. MAKE YOUR DECISION— SAVE SAPPHIRE? OR KILL SAPPHIRE?

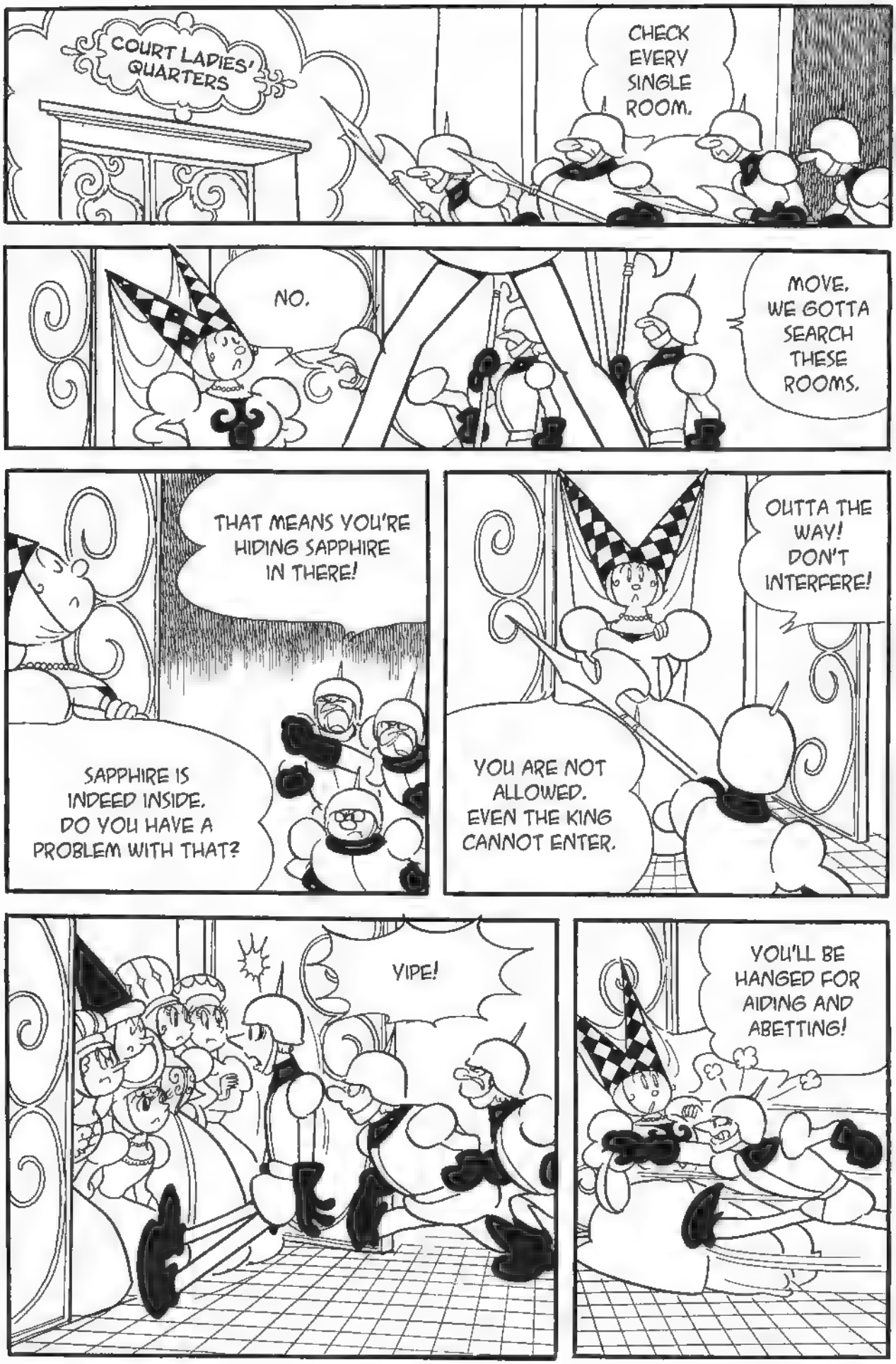

BABA-
YAGA!
ALL RIGHT... ALL RIGHT!
I'LL MAKE YOUR
DAUGHTER
MY QUEEN.

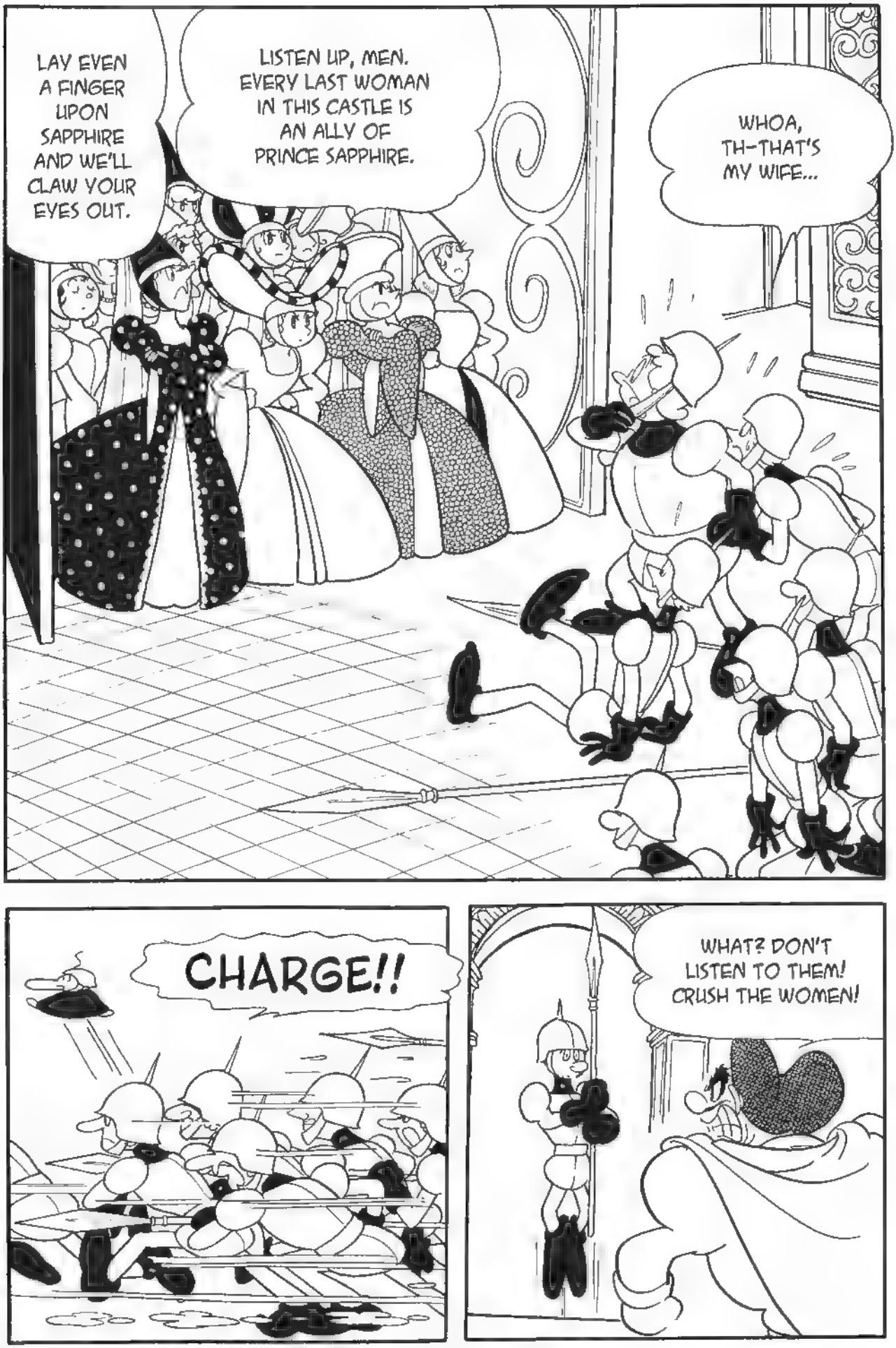

WHOA
WHUMP
FLASH
YIKES!
EEK!
ARGH!
IT'S RAINING TOADS
AND SNAKES!
IT'S THE DEVIL'S WORK!
STOP THE EXECUTION!
NO, CONTINUE!
GET BACK HERE!

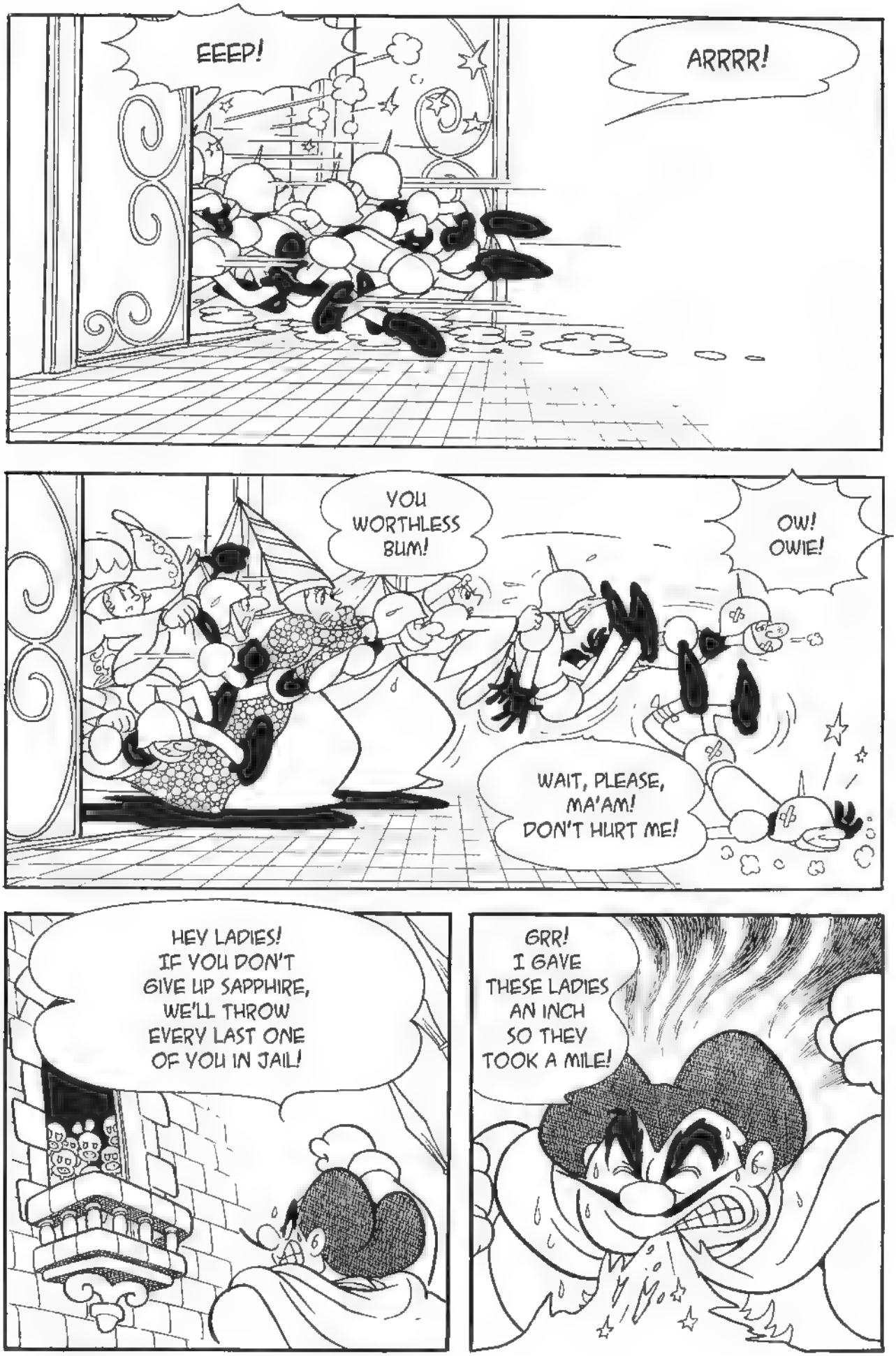
DID YOU REALLY RESCUE SAPPHIRE? IS SHE SAFE? WHERE'S YOUR PROOF?
HO HO HO, YOU HAVE MY WORD.
SEE, PRINCE?
ALL BETTER.
NOW YOU KEEP YOURS! MARRY MY DAUGHTER HECATE! OH HO, I'M SO HAPPY!
WAIT! MY MIND IS SPINNING! LET ME CATCH MY BREATH!

WE'LL GET READY AND MEET YOU THERE LATER.
PLEASE, DO SO!
CAN'T I GO BACK TO MY CASTLE FIRST?
DOES IT HAVE TO BE RIGHT NOW?
POOF
UNTIL WE MEET AGAIN, DEAR PRINCE!

SO IT WAS REAL AFTER ALL! OH, WHAT HAVE I DONE?
WAS THAT A DREAM? I WISH IT WAS.
AH! A RING!
EVEN SO, HE CAN'T HAVE GOTTEN OUTSIDE THE CASTLE GATES!
FIND HIM AND DRAG HIM HERE!
HMPH! SAPPHIRE SNUCK AWAY WHILE EVERYONE WAS PANICKING OVER A LITTLE LIGHTNING.


COURT LADIES' QUARTERS
CHECK EVERY SINGLE ROOM.
NO.
MOVE. WE GOTTA SEARCH THESE ROOMS.
THAT MEANS YOU'RE HIDING SAPPHIRE IN THERE!
SAPPHIRE IS INDEED INSIDE. DO YOU HAVE A PROBLEM WITH THAT?
OUTTA THE WAY! DON'T INTERFERE!
YOU ARE NOT ALLOWED. EVEN THE KING CANNOT ENTER.
YIPE!
YOU'LL BE HANGED FOR AIDING AND ABETTING!


LAY EVEN A FINGER UPON SAPPHIRE AND WE'LL CLAW YOUR EYES OUT.
LISTEN UP, MEN. EVERY LAST WOMAN IN THIS CASTLE IS AN ALLY OF PRINCE SAPPHIRE.
WHOA, TH-THAT'S MY WIFE...
CHARGE!!
WHAT? DON'T LISTEN TO THEM! CRUSH THE WOMEN!


EEEP!
ARRRR!
YOU WORTHLESS BUM!
OW! OWIE!
WAIT, PLEASE, MA'AM! DON'T HURT ME!
HEY LADIES! IF YOU DON'T GIVE UP SAPPHIRE, WE'LL THROW EVERY LAST ONE OF YOU IN JAIL!
GRR! I GAVE THESE LADIES AN INCH SO THEY TOOK A MILE!

HUH?
UHH...
OR LOOK AFTER THE KIDS!
BE MY GUEST! THAT MEANS NO ONE WILL WAIT ON THE MEN OR DO ALL THE COOKING, CLEANING, WASHING, SEWING AND LAUNDRY,
A BATTLE OF WILLS BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN. SIT BACK, RELAX AND ENJOY THE SHOW.
WE CAN STAY HERE FOR MONTHS, UNTIL YOU SURRENDER!

Chapter 20

Warring Women

BACK IN HIS CASTLE, PRINCE FRANZ'S HEART ACHED
WITH REGRET OVER THE PROMISE
HE MADE TO MADAME HELL.
BUT THERE WAS NO GOING BACK.
HE WALLOWED IN SORROW AS HE FELT
THE INEXORABLE TUG OF DESTINY.

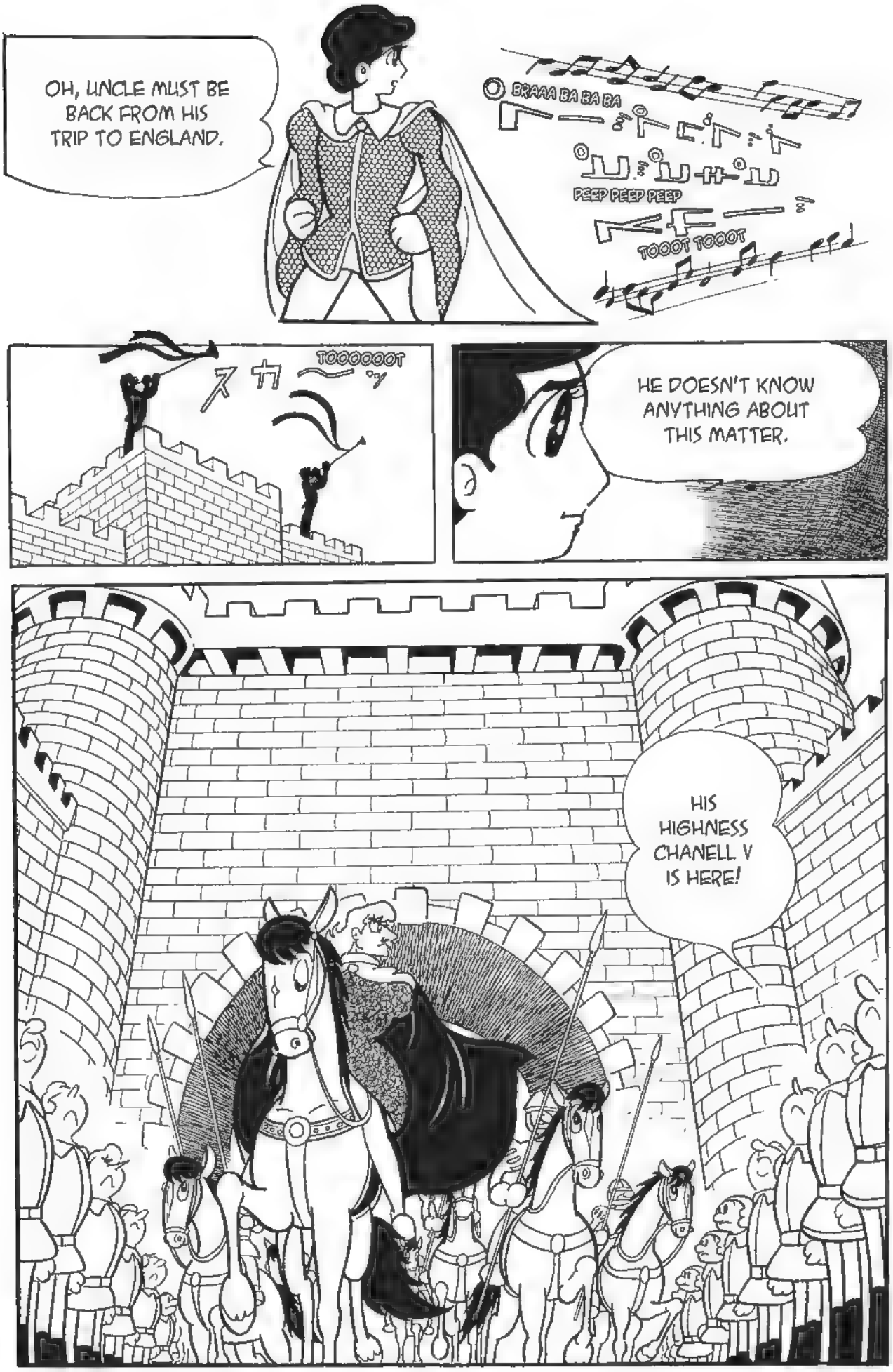
HAVE YOU COME AT LAST, DAMNED DEVIL?
WELL HELLO THERE, PRINCE. FEELING FINE TODAY?
DON'T JUST POP UP IN A CLOUD OF SMOKE! USE THE FRONT GATE FOR CRYING OUT LOUD!
POOF
HO HO HO. I'VE BROUGHT MY DAUGHTER ALONG...

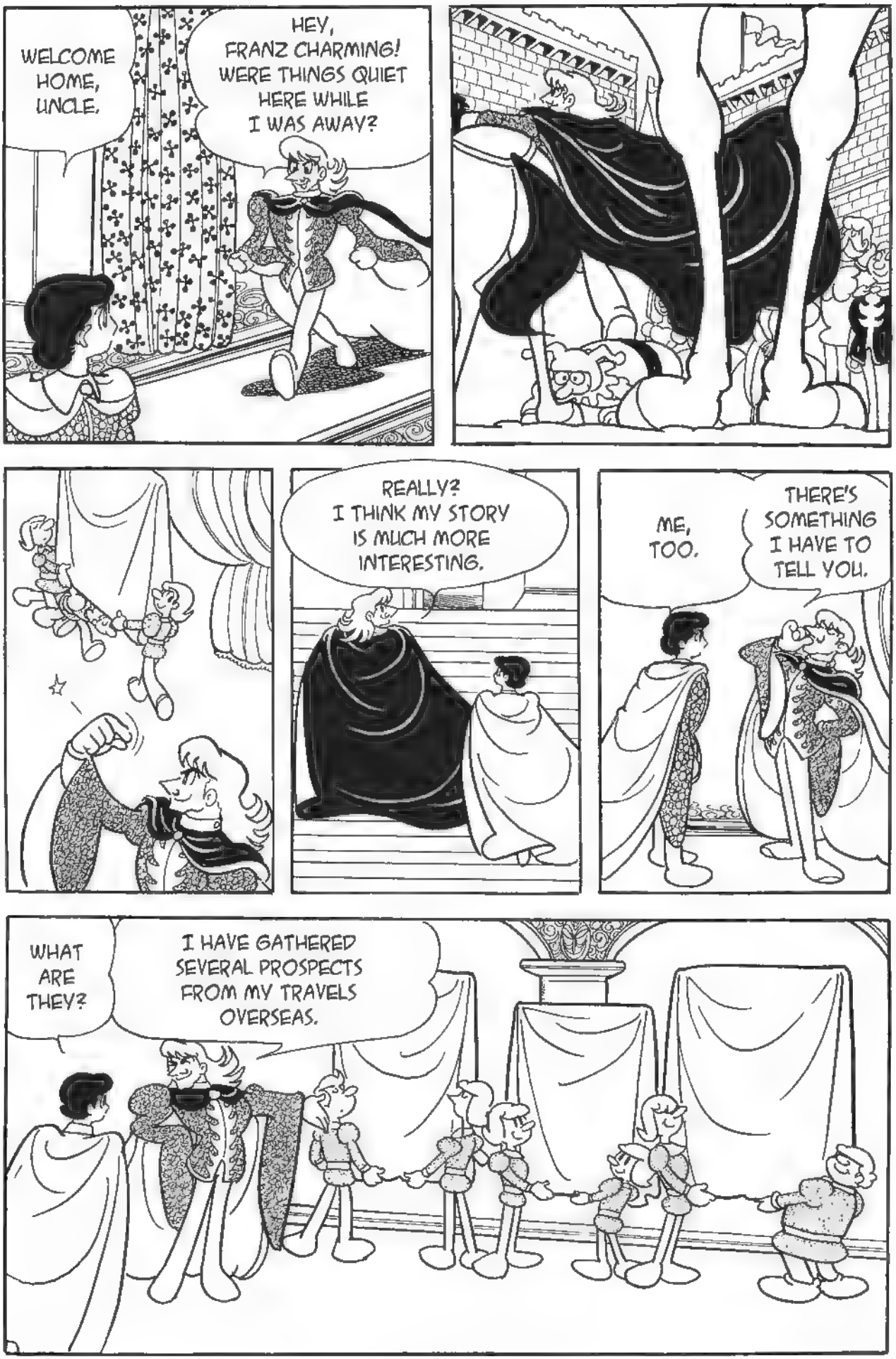
THIS IS HECATE. PLEASE BE KIND TO HER.
I FEEL LIKE I'VE SEEN THOSE EYES BEFORE...
SO SHE'S TO BE MY WIFE...
WHY DON'T YOU TWO HAVE A LITTLE CHAT? YOU CAN'T DO THAT WITH AN OLD LADY CHAPERONING YOU! HO HO HO!

BOO!
AH!
WHEW! I WAS SO SICK OF THOSE SUFFOCATING CLOTHES!
WHY DO YOU HUMANS WEAR SUCH THINGS?

WHAT? ARE YOU SERIOUS?
I DON'T WANT TO BE YOUR QUEEN.
DON'T BE ANGRY, BUT...
SO I LET HER DRAG ME HERE, BUT I'M REALLY NOT INTERESTED.
MOTHER'S THE ONE WHO WANTS ME TO MARRY YOU.
...AGAINST THE PLAN. RIGHT. I FEEL NOTHING FOR YOU.
SO THAT MEANS YOU'RE...
RIGHT! YOU'RE THAT CAT!
I'VE SEEN YOUR EYES SOMEWHERE BEFORE...
HEH HEH. YOU REMEMBERED. YES, THAT WAS ME.
YOU APPEARED WHEN I WAS QUARRELLING WITH BLOOD.

SO WHAT?
HOW CREEPY! YOU REALLY ARE A DEMON GIRL!
WHAT'S WITH THE WICKED NARROW PANEL?!
DON'T BELITTLE ME! EVEN DEMONS HAVE HEARTS!
I FEEL SORRY FOR YOU, PRINCE, AND I WISH THERE WAS SOMETHING I COULD DO TO HELP, BUT...
IF YOU HAVE A HEART THEN YOU MUST UNDERSTAND HOW I FEEL, HECATE.

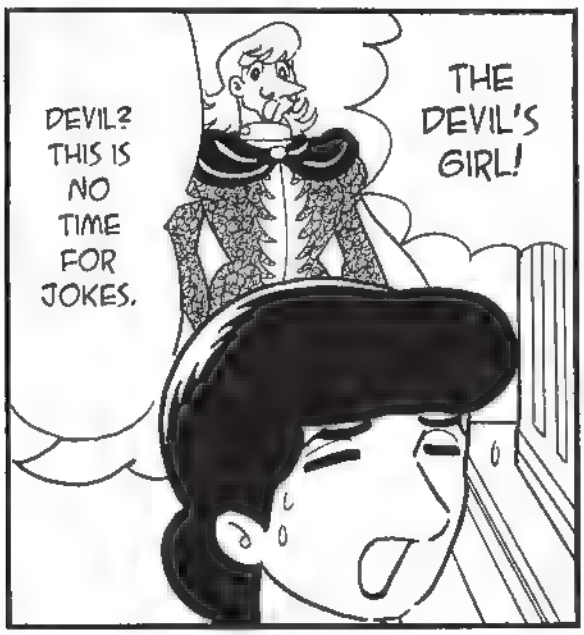

OH, UNCLE MUST BE BACK FROM HIS TRIP TO ENGLAND.
BRAAA BA BA BA
PEEP PEEP PEEP
TOOOT TOOOT
TOOOOOOT
HE DOESN'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THIS MATTER.
HIS HIGHNESS CHANELL V IS HERE!


WELCOME HOME, UNCLE.
HEY, FRANZ CHARMING! WERE THINGS QUIET HERE WHILE I WAS AWAY?
REALLY? I THINK MY STORY IS MUCH MORE INTERESTING.
ME, TOO.
THERE'S SOMETHING I HAVE TO TELL YOU.
WHAT ARE THEY?
I HAVE GATHERED SEVERAL PROSPECTS FROM MY TRAVELS OVERSEAS.

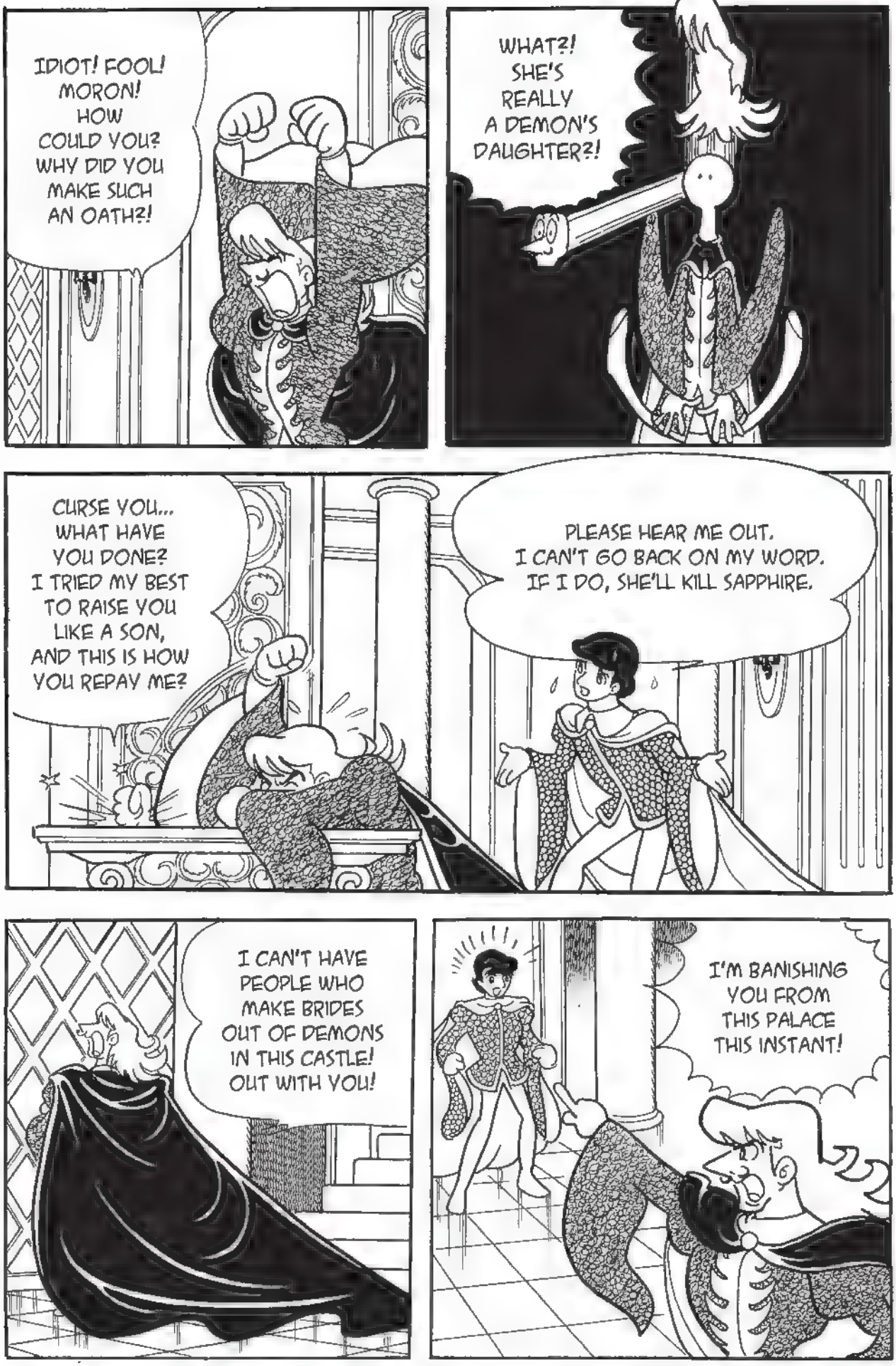
FROM RIGHT: MARQUIS DU DRUNK'S THIRD DAUGHTER, PRINCESS TIPSY. NEXT, ARCHDUKE GINGER'S DAUGHTER, PRINCESS ASPARAGUS. AND MARQUIS SPINSTER'S OLD MISS. PICK ONE.

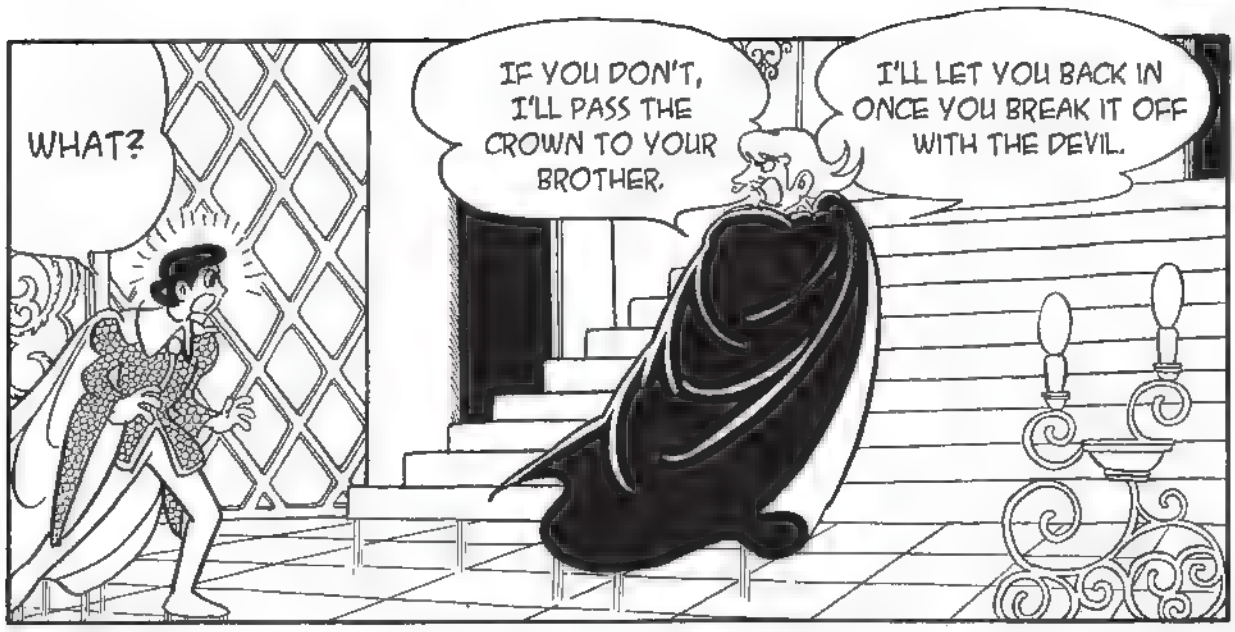
WH-WHAT?!
I'M ALREADY BETROTHED. SORRY FOR NOT GETTING YOUR PERMISSION.

WHAT'RE YOU SAYING? ALL THOSE DOWRIES COME WITH BRIDES! ER, ALL THE BRIDES COME WITH DOWRIES!
I'M VERY SORRY, UNCLE, BUT I CAN'T CHOOSE ANY OF THEM.


DEVIL? THIS IS NO TIME FOR JOKES.
THE DEVIL'S GIRL!

SHE IS...
WHO IS SHE? WHERE'S SHE FROM?


IDIOT! FOOL! MORON! HOW COULD YOU? WHY DID YOU MAKE SUCH AN OATH?!
WHAT?! SHE'S REALLY A DEMON'S DAUGHTER?!
CURSE YOU... WHAT HAVE YOU DONE? I TRIED MY BEST TO RAISE YOU LIKE A SON, AND THIS IS HOW YOU REPAY ME?
PLEASE HEAR ME OUT. I CAN'T GO BACK ON MY WORD. IF I DO, SHE'LL KILL SAPPHIRE.
I CAN'T HAVE PEOPLE WHO MAKE BRIDES OUT OF DEMONS IN THIS CASTLE! OUT WITH YOU!
I'M BANISHING YOU FROM THIS PALACE THIS INSTANT!

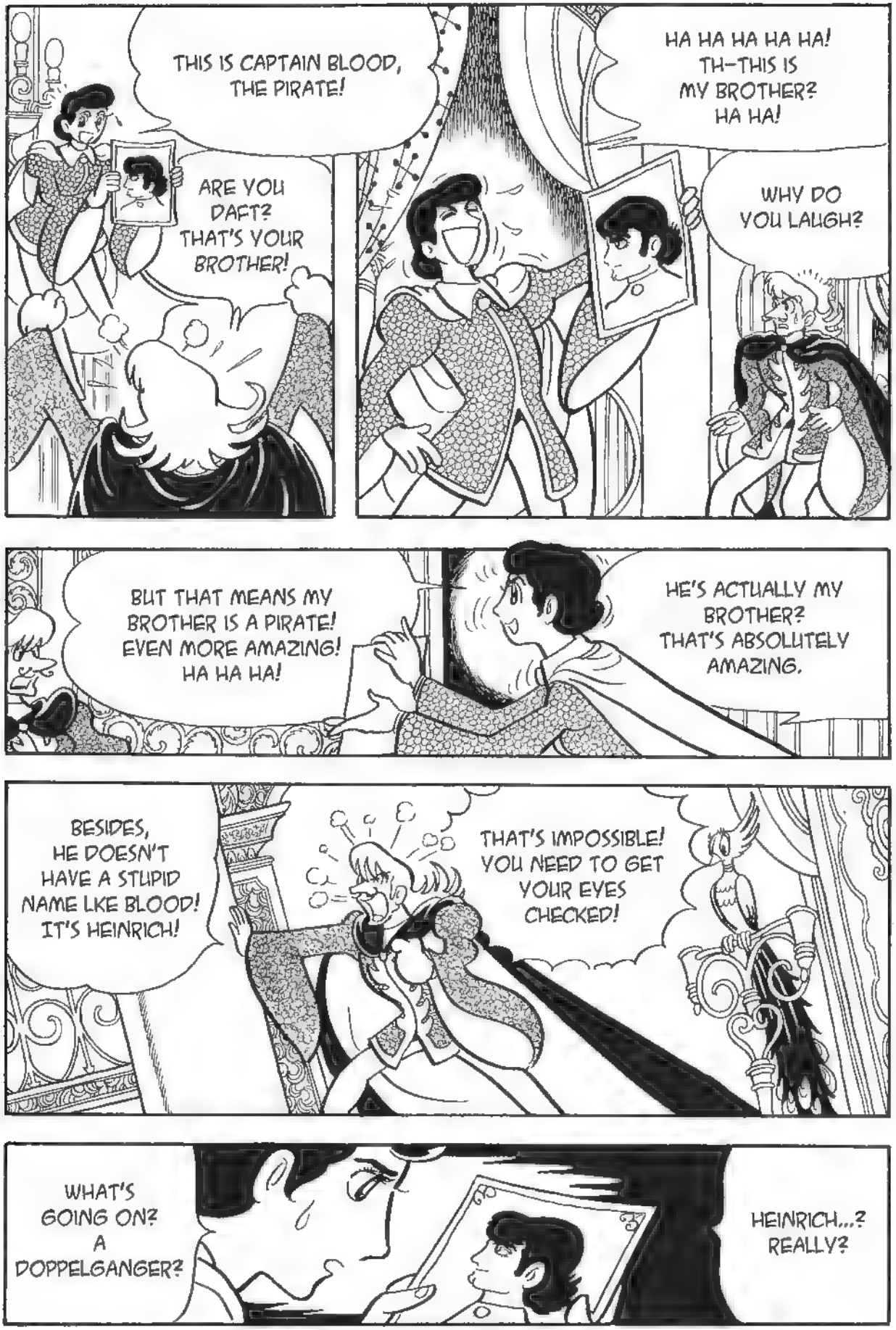

WHAT?
IF YOU DON'T, I'LL PASS THE CROWN TO YOUR BROTHER.
I'LL LET YOU BACK IN ONCE YOU BREAK IT OFF WITH THE DEVIL.

YES, YOU DO. YOU DON'T KNOW ABOUT HIM.

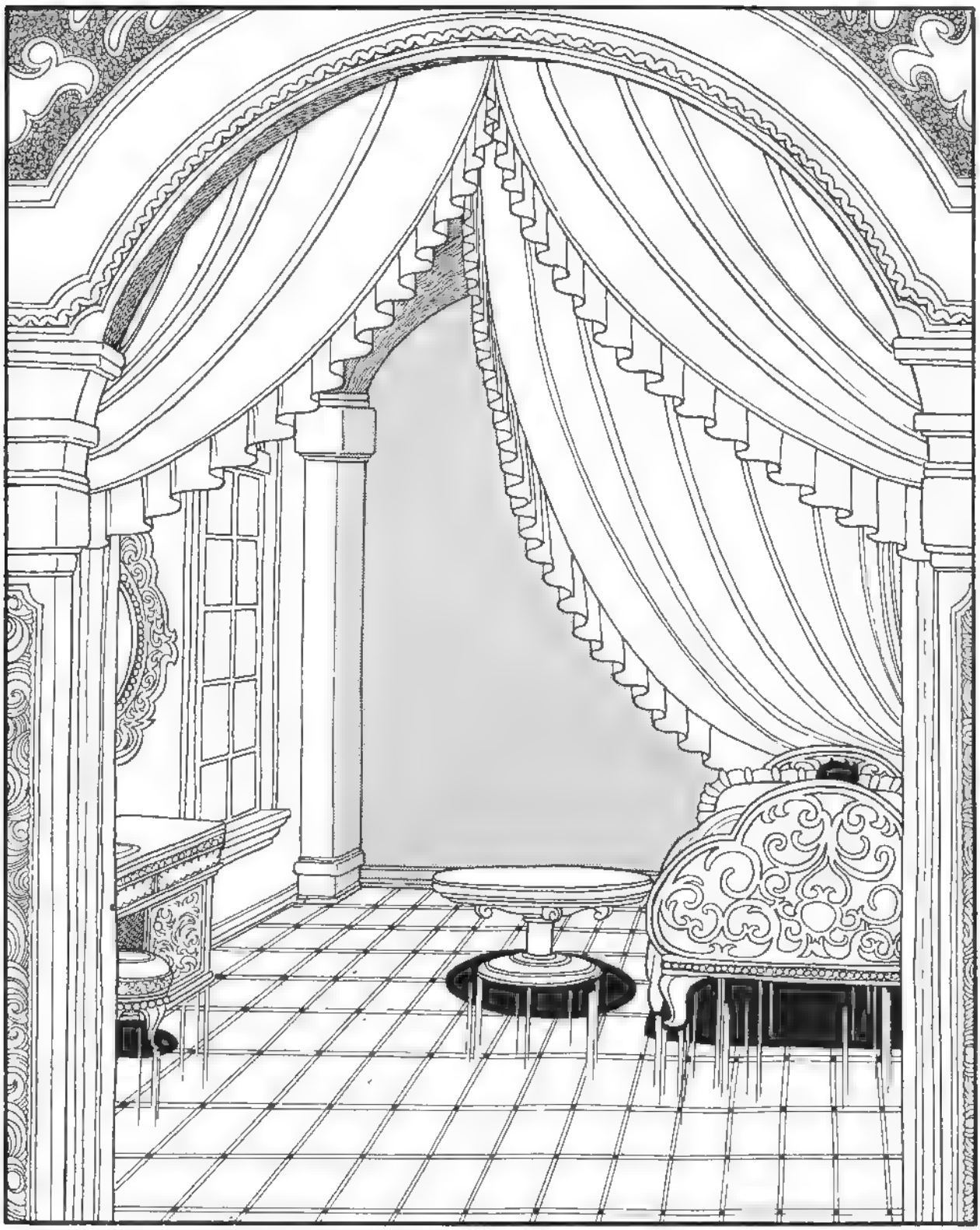
AN OLDER BROTHER?
I HAVE A BROTHER?

THIS IS HIM. TAKE A GOOD LOOK BEFORE YOU LEAVE.

WE CHOSE TO HAVE HIM RAISED BY ITALIAN NOBLES. I DIDN'T LIKE HIM, YOU SEE. I WANTED YOU TO TAKE OVER THE THRONE, SO I RAISED YOU. BUT IF YOU INSIST ON MARRYING HELLSPAWN, EVEN YOUR BROTHER WOULD BE A BETTER CHOICE.


THIS IS CAPTAIN BLOOD, THE PIRATE!
ARE YOU DAFT? THAT'S YOUR BROTHER!
HA HA HA HA HA! TH-THIS IS MY BROTHER? HA HA!
WHY DO YOU LAUGH?
BUT THAT MEANS MY BROTHER IS A PIRATE! EVEN MORE AMAZING! HA HA HA!
HE'S ACTUALLY MY BROTHER? THAT'S ABSOLUTELY AMAZING.
BESIDES, HE DOESN'T HAVE A STUPID NAME LKE BLOOD! IT'S HEINRICH!
THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE! YOU NEED TO GET YOUR EYES CHECKED!
WHAT'S GOING ON? A DOPPELGANGER?
HEINRICH...? REALLY?

MEANWHILE, IN SILVERLAND, SAPPHIRE RESTED
HER WEARY MIND AND BODY IN A BED
IN THE WOMEN'S QUARTERS AFTER BEING TRAPPED
INSIDE BY DUKE DURALUMIN.



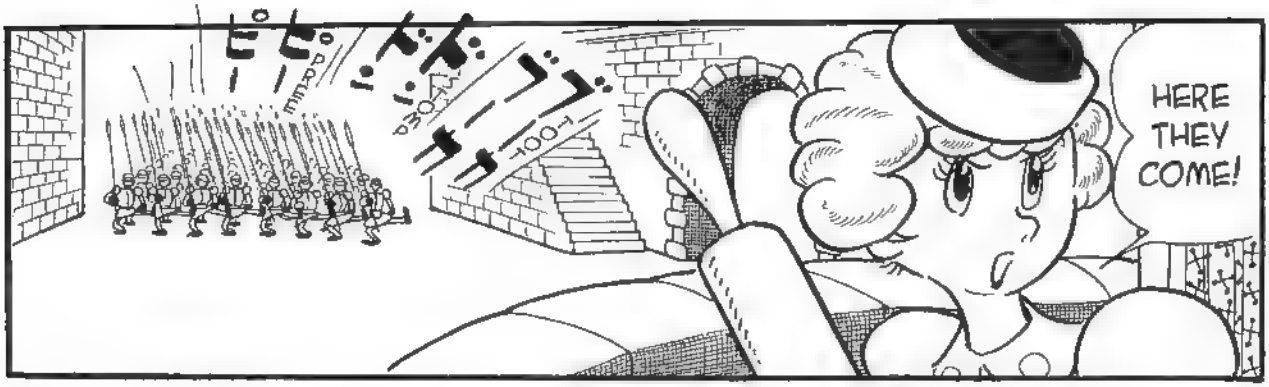
ARE YOU AWAKE?
GASP
OOH....
IT'S TO BE EXPECTED. YOU'VE BEEN HAVING A ROUGH TIME.
I SLEPT TOO MUCH.
I WAS JUST SO RELIEVED YOU SAVED ME.
NO TROUBLE AT ALL, SAPPHIRE!
THANK YOU FOR ALL YOUR HELP!
I'M FEELING MUCH BETTER NOW.

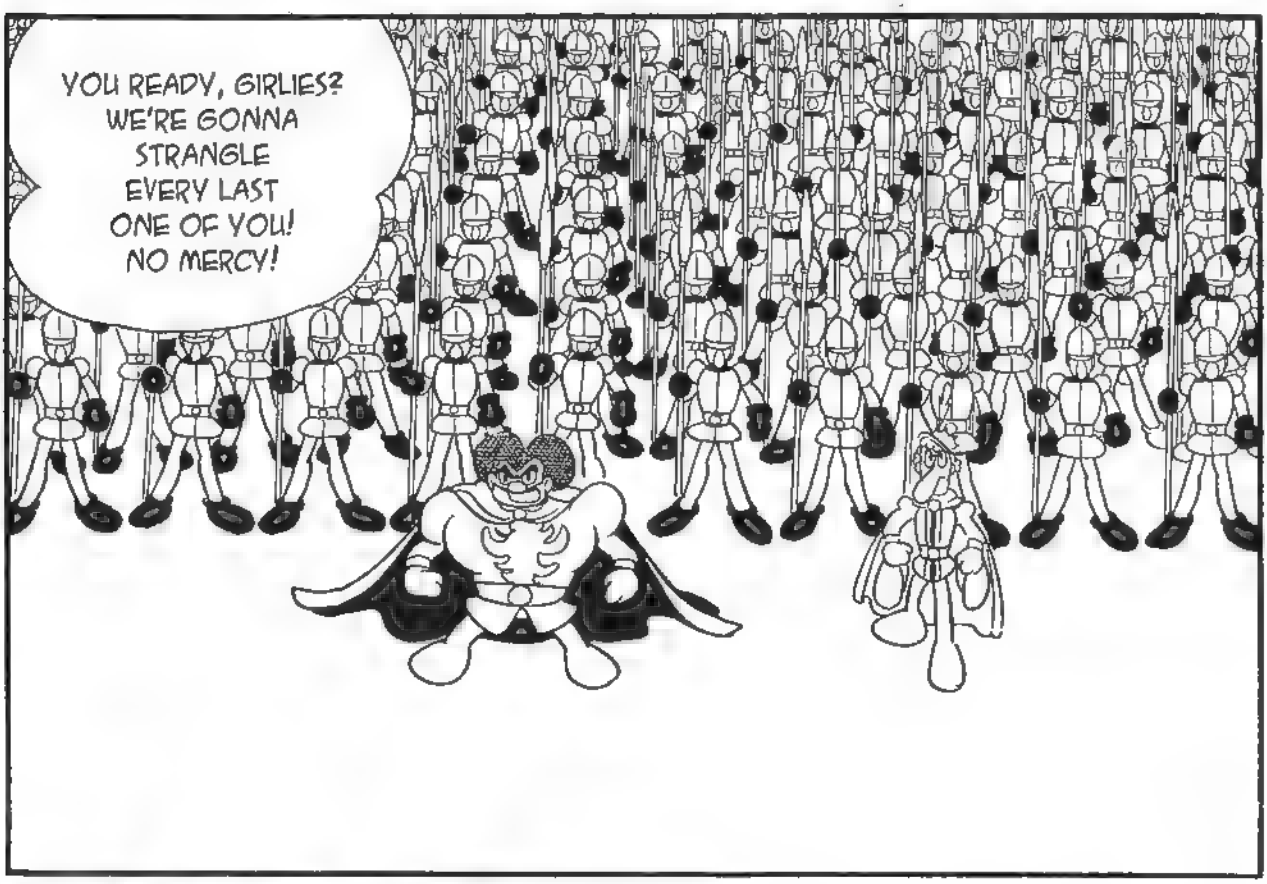
WE WILL FIGHT. WE'LL SHOW THESE MEN THAT THE WEAKER SEX IS FREE AND PROUD!
NOW IS THE TIME FOR ALL THE COURT LADIES TO RISE UP AS ONE. WE'RE ALL SO MOVED BY YOUR BRAVERY.
IT'S ALL THE FAULT OF THAT STUPID LAW THAT FORBIDS WOMEN FROM ASCENDING THE THRONE! IT'S MISOGYNISTIC!
OH? YOU'LL FIGHT THE MEN?
LISTEN UP! ANYONE WHO DARES DISOBEY US WILL BE THROWN INTO PRISON, WOMAN OR NO!
WHAT'RE YOU WHINING ABOUT NOW, WENCHES?!

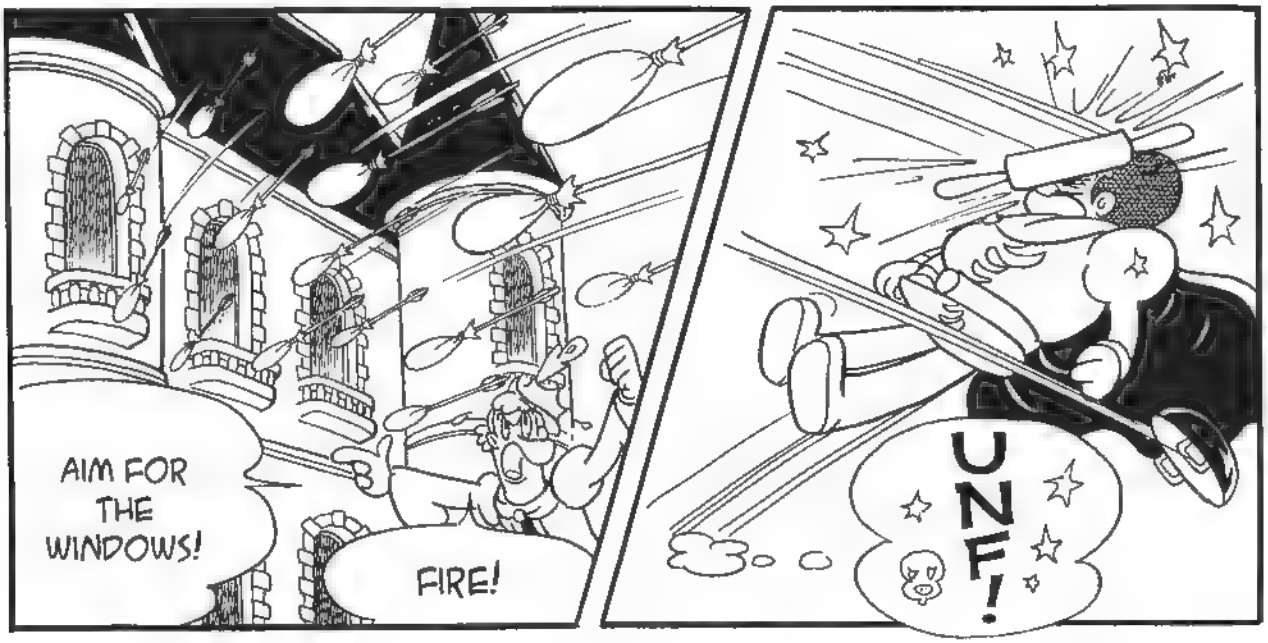
WHAT? WHEN?
DUKE DURALUMIN'S ALL RILED UP. HE'S GOING TO BREAK DOWN THE DOORS AND TIE EVERYONE UP!
WHAT'LL WE DO?
LET'S GIVE THAT NASTY DUKE HELL, LADIES! AN EYE FOR AN EYE, FANG FOR FANG!
HE'LL BREAK THROUGH IN A FEW HOURS.
YOU CAN'T VERY WELL FIGHT WEARING DRESSES.
WE WON'T LOSE, EVEN IF IT GETS ROUGH!
IT'S A BATTLE OF THE SEXES! WE MUST DEFEND THE HONOR OF WOMANKIND!

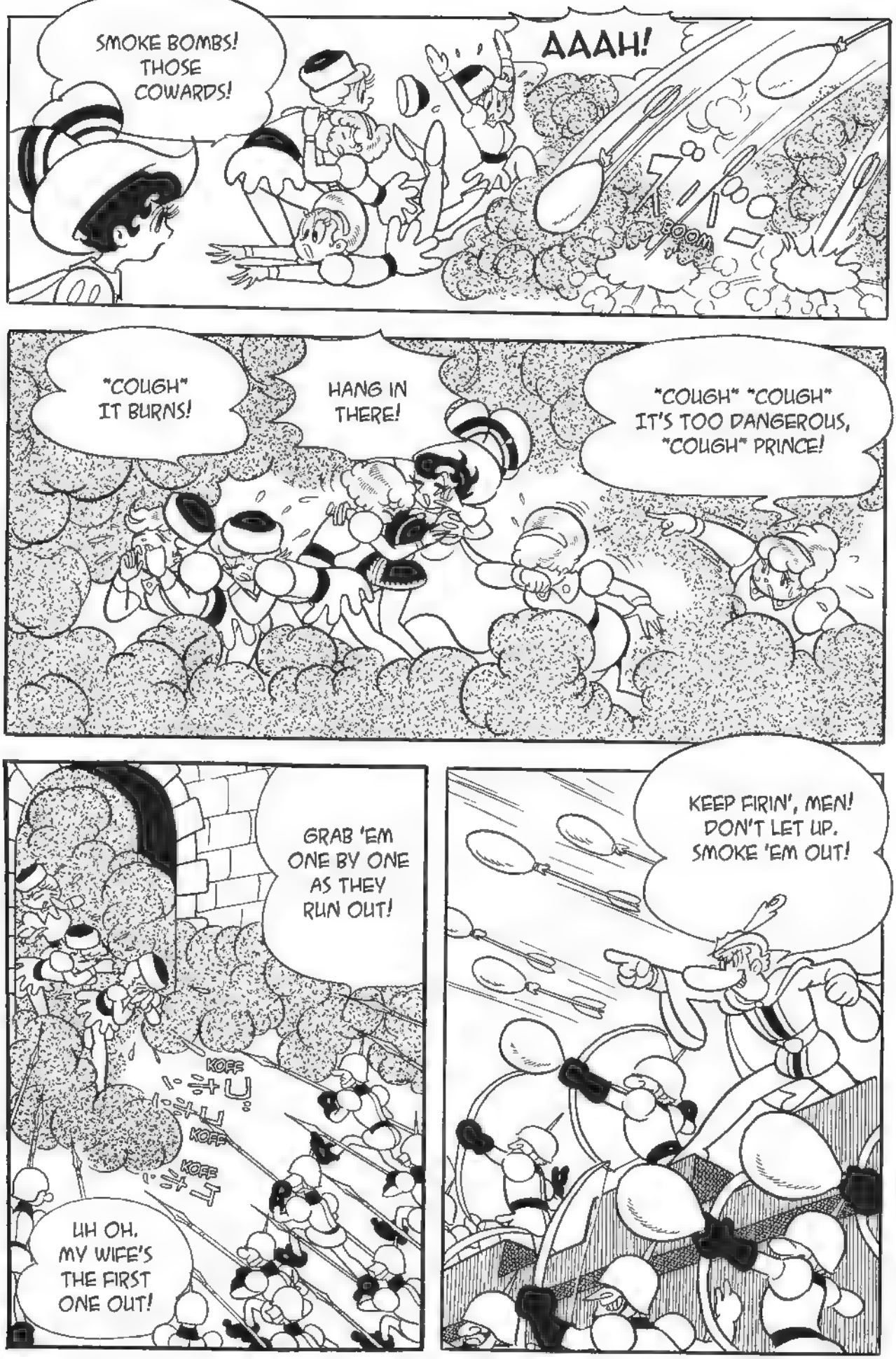
YOU'RE ALL GOING TO WEAR THOSE?
EVERYONE HELPED OUT SEWING THEM!
LOOK! WE HAVE COMBAT UNIFORMS!
THIS SHIRT IS TOO TIGHT!
HOW DO I LOOK? I COULD EVEN GOLF LIKE THIS!
ARE THERE ANY WITH LACE?
HURRY UP AND CHANGE.
THESE ARE FOR FIGHTING, DUM-DUM.
WE CAN EVEN LINE DANCE!
AND I'M GEORGE SAND!
I FEEL LIKE JEANNE D'ARC!

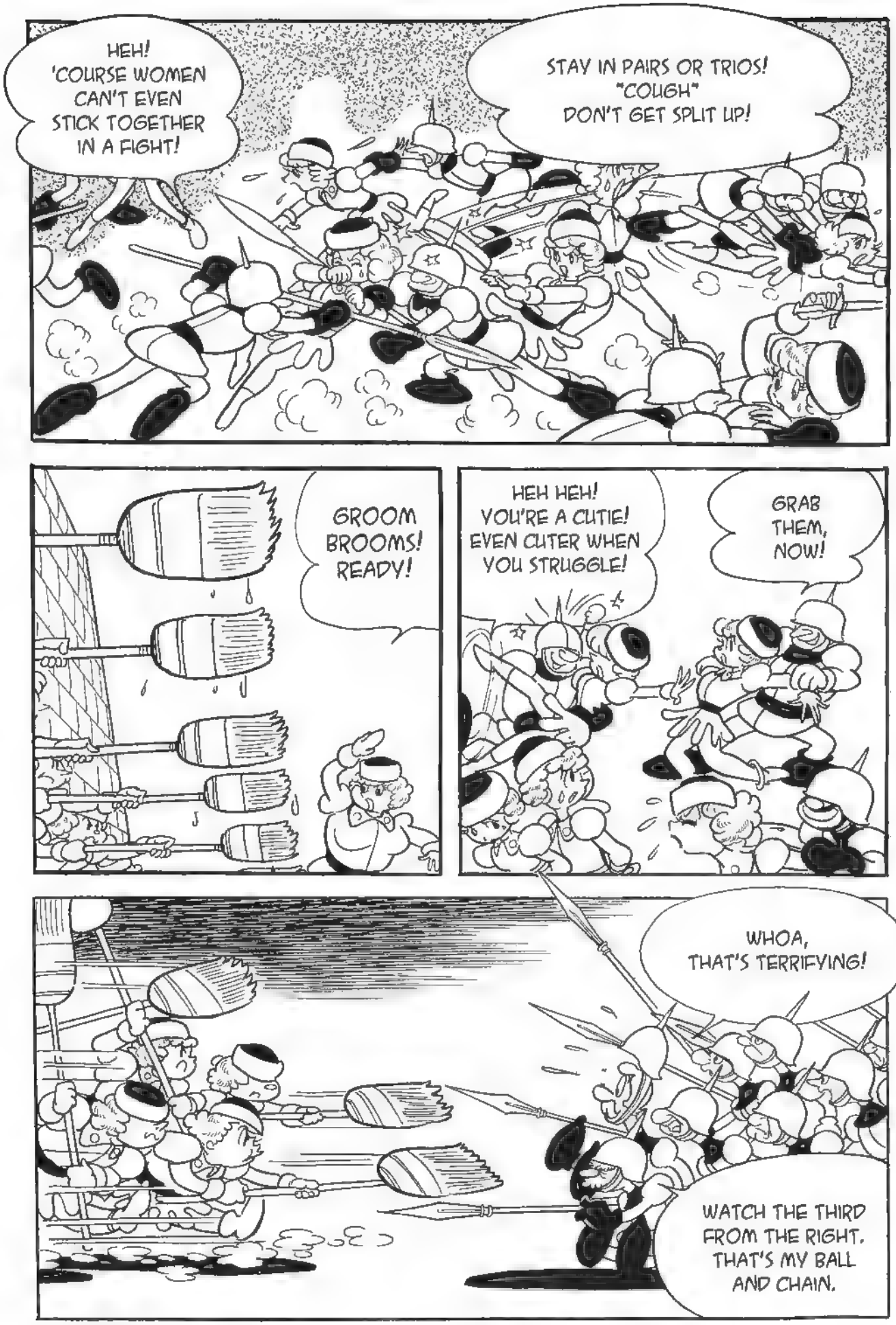
I SHOULDN'T HAVE CUT MY NAILS...
SHE'S ALWAYS SLAPPING HER HUSBAND, SO SHE'S READY.
STRATEGY? WE JUST SLAP THEM IF THEY GET IN, RIGHT?
THUMP
ALL RIGHT, LADIES, NOW WE'LL TALK STRATEGY. JUST FOLLOW MY COMMAND.
I GOT THE WRONG SIZE.
YOU'LL TEAM UP IN GROUPS OF TWO OR THREE, SURROUND THE MEN, GRAB THEM, AND SCREAM INTO THEIR EARS.
QUIET!
IT'S A GREAT CHANCE!
WE'RE GONNA TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO SHOW THEM GIRL POWER!
HEY, LADIES, NOT ALL THE MEN ARE EVIL. DON'T GO CRAZY.

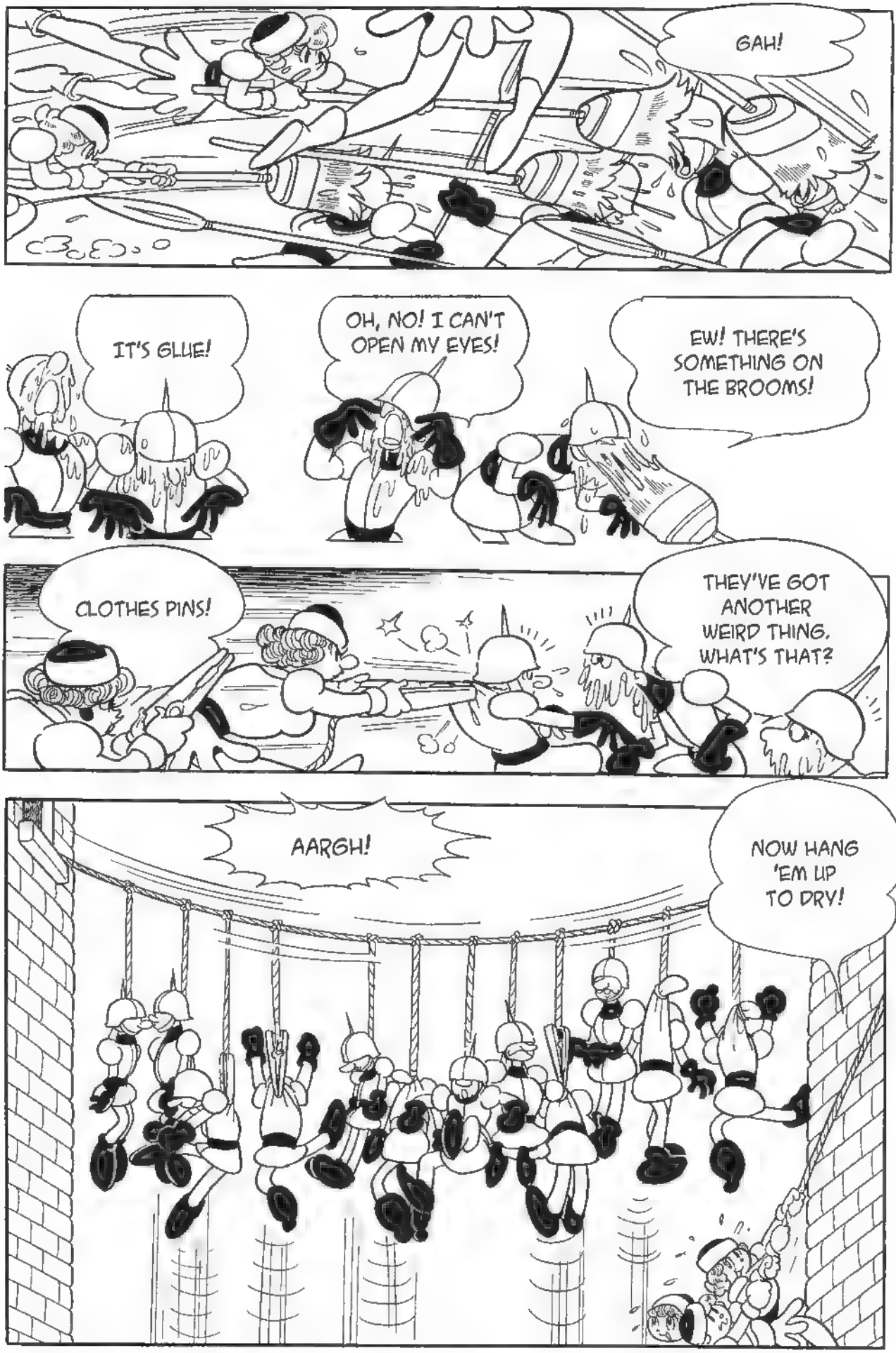

HERE THEY COME!


YOU READY, GIRLIES? WE'RE GONNA STRANGLE EVERY LAST ONE OF YOU! NO MERCY!

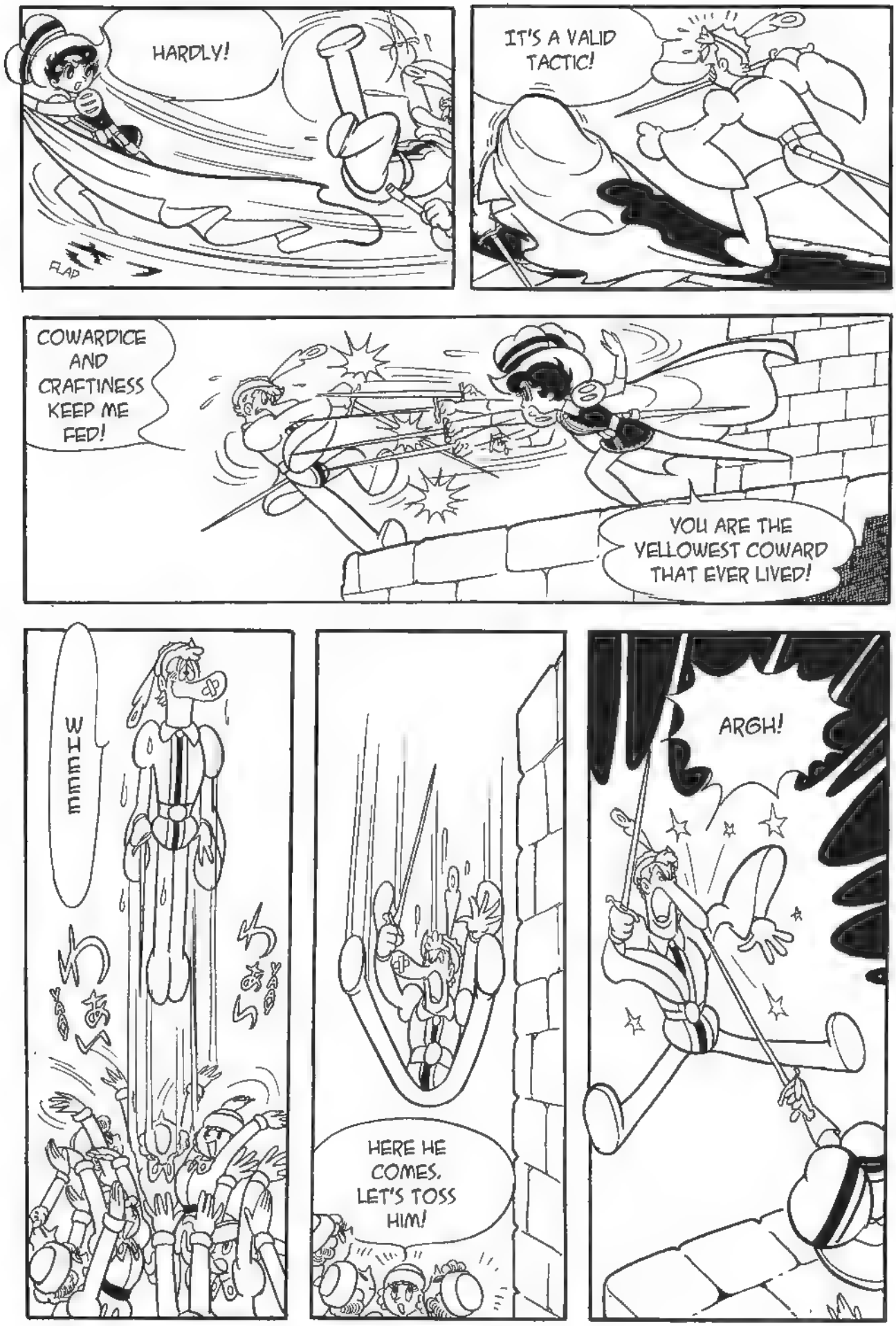

AIM FOR THE WINDOWS!
FIRE!
UNF!


SMOKE BOMBS! THOSE COWARDS!
AAAH!
BOOM
"COUGH" IT BURNS!
HANG IN THERE!
"COUGH" "COUGH" IT'S TOO DANGEROUS, "COUGH" PRINCE!
GRAB 'EM ONE BY ONE AS THEY RUN OUT!
KOFF
KOFF
KOFF
UH OH. MY WIFE'S THE FIRST ONE OUT!
KEEP FIRIN', MEN! DON'T LET UP. SMOKE 'EM OUT!

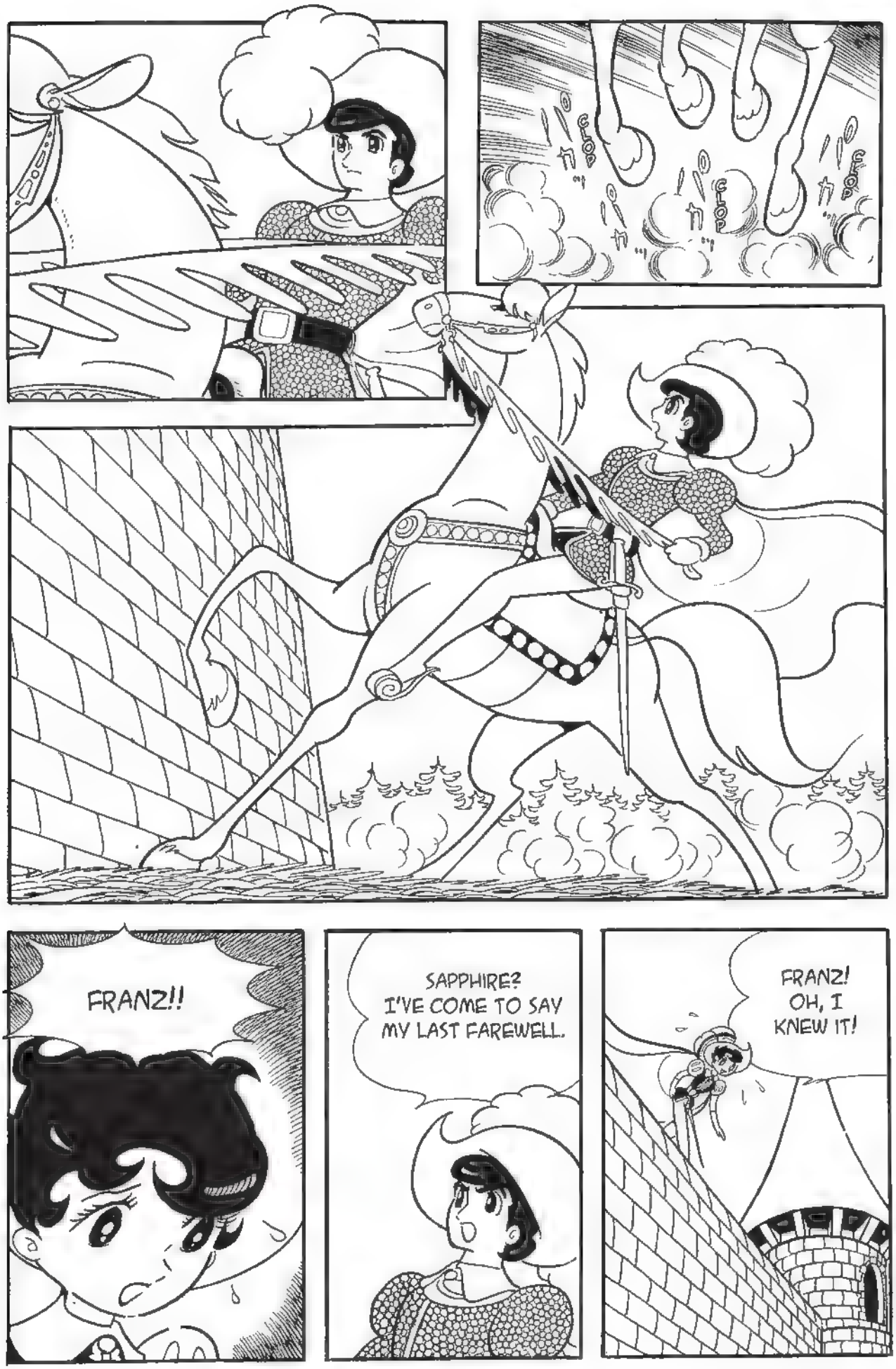

HEH! 'COURSE WOMEN CAN'T EVEN STICK TOGETHER IN A FIGHT!
STAY IN PAIRS OR TRIOS! "COUGH" DON'T GET SPLIT UP!
GROOM BROOMS! READY!
HEH HEH! YOU'RE A CUTIE! EVEN CUTER WHEN YOU STRUGGLE!
GRAB THEM, NOW!
WHOA, THAT'S TERRIFYING!
WATCH THE THIRD FROM THE RIGHT. THAT'S MY BALL AND CHAIN.


GAH!
IT'S GLUE!
OH, NO! I CAN'T OPEN MY EYES!
EW! THERE'S SOMETHING ON THE BROOMS!
CLOTHES PINS!
THEY'VE GOT ANOTHER WEIRD THING. WHAT'S THAT?
AARGH!
NOW HANG 'EM UP TO DRY!

THEN LET'S SHOW 'EM HOW IT'S DONE. MANO A MANO.
YOU NINCOMPOOPS! BLOCKHEADS! NO FIGHTING STYLE!
EVEN AS A WOMAN, I'D NEVER LOSE TO THE LIKES OF YOU! WATCH YOURSELF!
HAH! YOU'RE NO LONGER A MAN, SO YOU CAN BARELY LAST A FULL MATCH ANYMORE. HAVE AT YOU!
YOU AND YOUR DIRTY TRICKS!

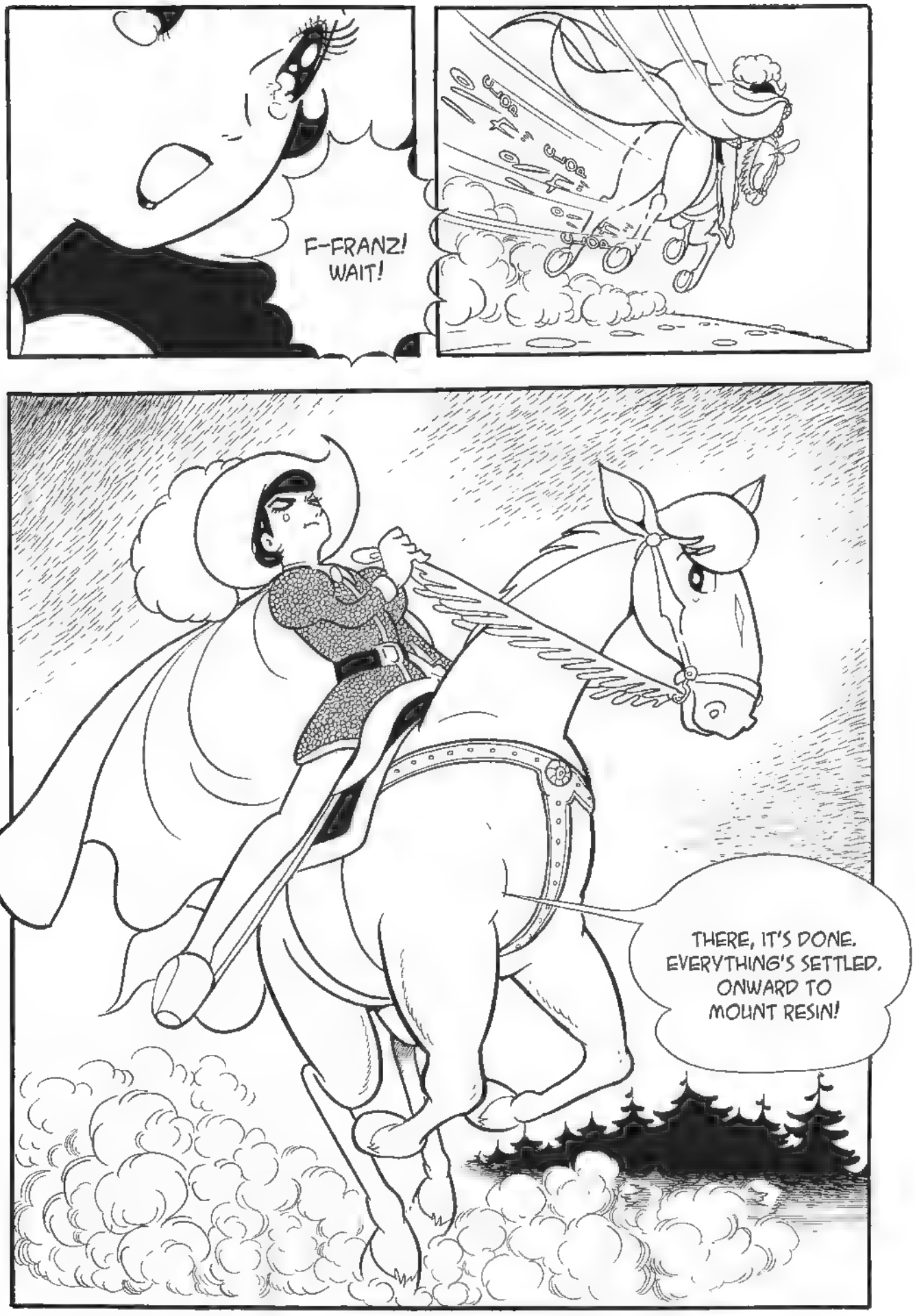

HARDLY!
FLAP
IT'S A VALID TACTIC!
COWARDICE AND CRAFTINESS KEEP ME FED!
YOU ARE THE YELLOWEST COWARD THAT EVER LIVED!
WHEEEE
わぁぁ
ちぁら
HERE HE COMES. LET'S TOSS HIM!
ARGH!

パカッ
CLOP
パカッ
パカッ
CLOP
パカッ
SOMEONE'S COMING.
WHO COULD IT BE,
AT SUCH A TIME?
PERHAPS IT'S...
IT LOOKS LIKE IT
MIGHT BE FRANZ...

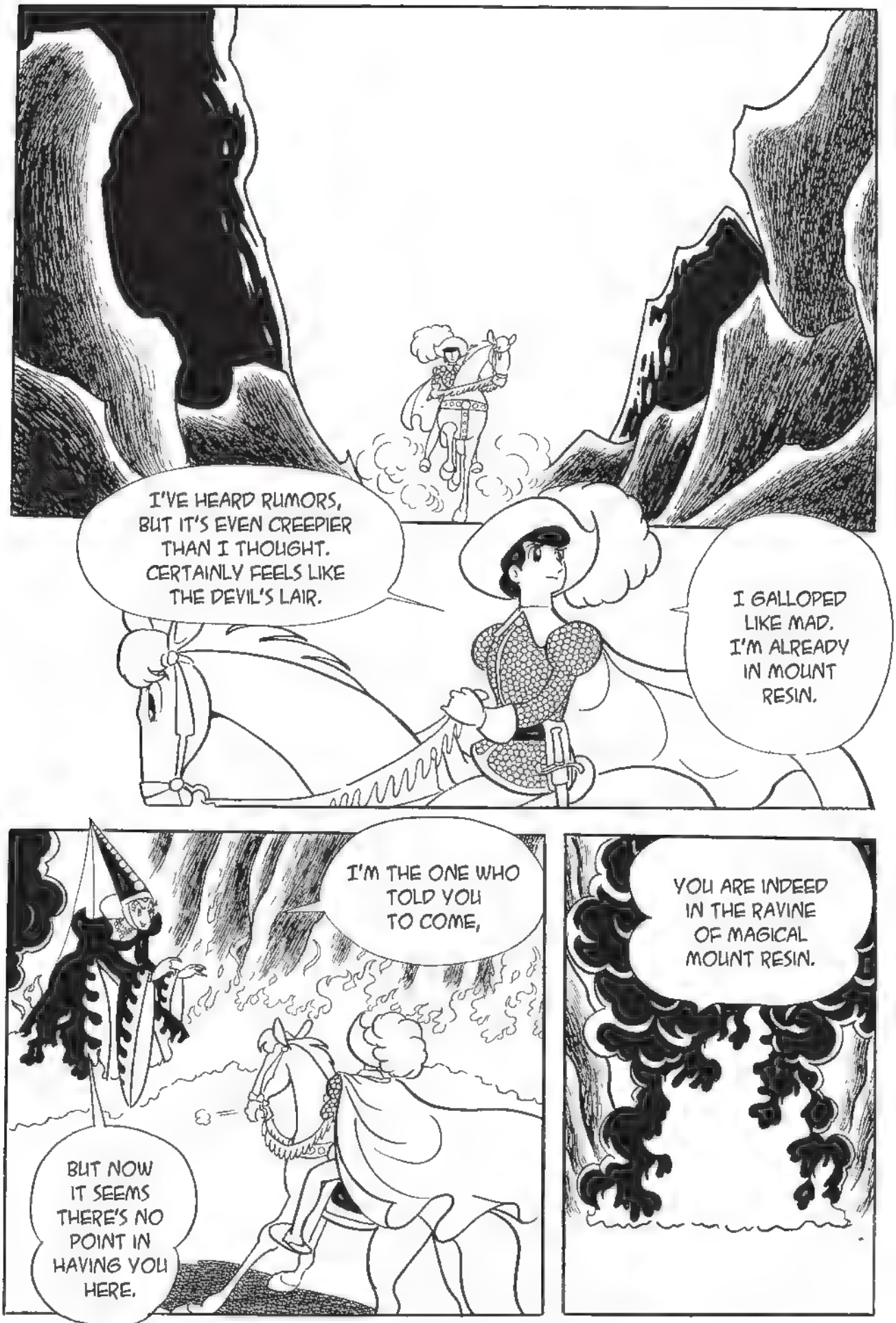

FRANZ!!
SAPPHIRE? I'VE COME TO SAY MY LAST FAREWELL.
FRANZ! OH, I KNEW IT!

SAPPHIRE, PLEASE DON'T GET UPSET, BUT I CAN'T MARRY YOU ANYMORE.
WHAT? WHAT ARE YOU SAYING, FRANZ? ARE YOU GOING TO MAKE SOMEONE ELSE YOUR QUEEN?
IT'S ALL SO SUDDEN... WHO IS SHE?
HA HA HA... SEE? THIS! IT'S THE DEVIL!
SHE'S BEHIND ME.

HA HA HA! IT'S EVIDENCE THAT A DEMON IS ENAMORED OF ME! I WILL NEVER BE FREE FROM THIS CURSE!
THIS RAIN... THIS LIGHTNING... OH! IT'S...
WHO IS IT? IT'S NOT THE WITCH'S DAUGHTER, IS IT?
HOW HORRIBLE! WHY ARE YOU BETROTHED TO A DEMON?
THAT'S WHY MY UNCLE BANISHED ME FROM THE CASTLE. I HAVE NO COUNTRY, PROPERTY OR RANK. I'M JUST A SAD FOOL, OWNED BY A WITCH. PLEASE FORGET ME, SAPPHIRE. FAREWELL!!
NO. NO... NO!
YES, IT'S HECATE.
SAPPHIRE, LET ME BE PLAIN. I'M MARRYING HECATE.


F-FRANZ! WAIT!
THERE, IT'S DONE. EVERYTHING'S SETTLED. ONWARD TO MOUNT RESIN!

WAIT, FRANZ, DON'T GO. PLEASE TELL ME WHY!
OH, HECATE! HOW COULD YOU...? I MUST BE HAVING A NIGHTMARE. OR I'VE GONE MAD!

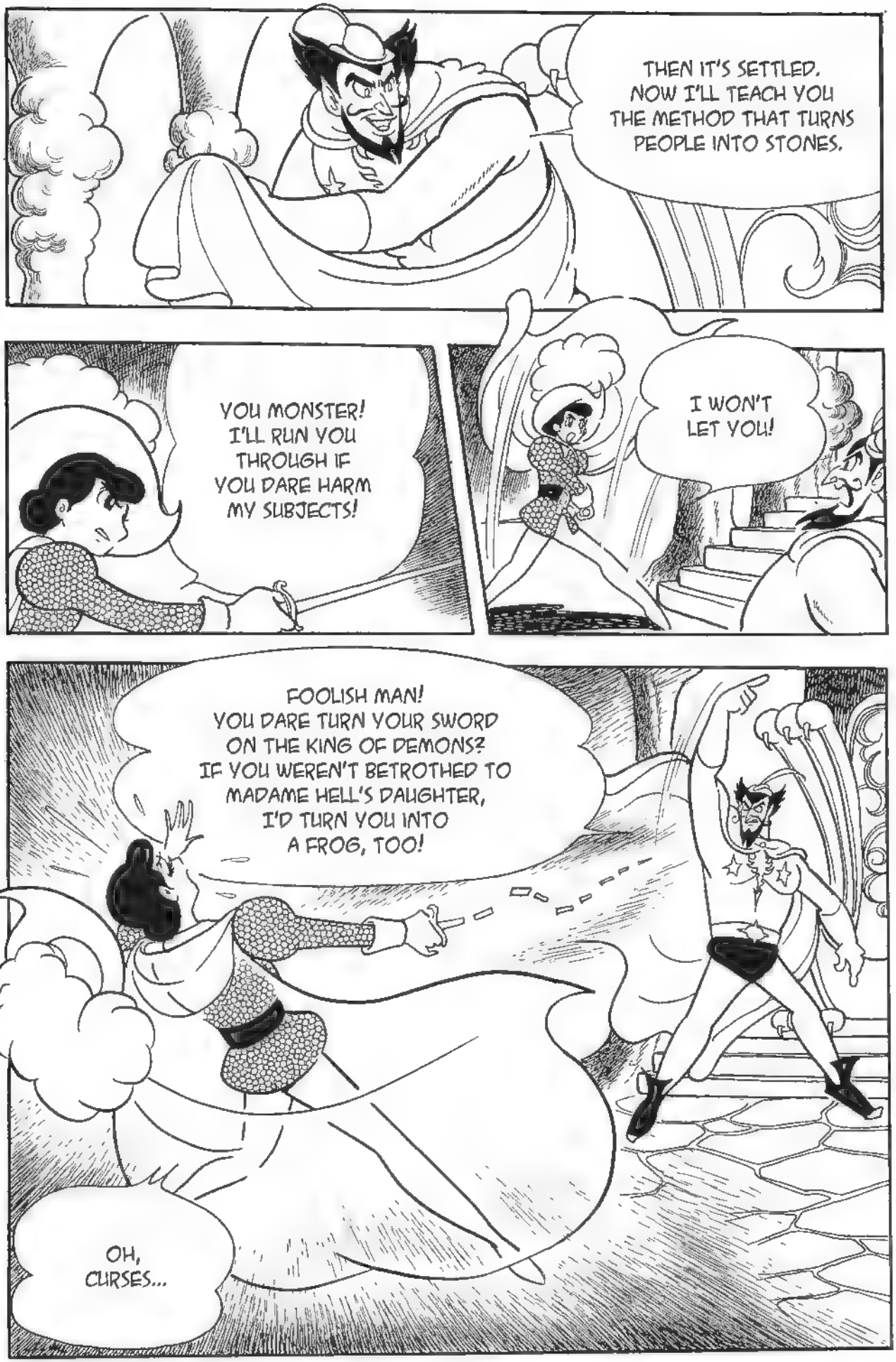

I'VE HEARD RUMORS, BUT IT'S EVEN CREEPIER THAN I THOUGHT. CERTAINLY FEELS LIKE THE DEVIL'S LAIR.
I GALLOPED LIKE MAD. I'M ALREADY IN MOUNT RESIN.
I'M THE ONE WHO TOLD YOU TO COME,
BUT NOW IT SEEMS THERE'S NO POINT IN HAVING YOU HERE.
YOU ARE INDEED IN THE RAVINE OF MAGICAL MOUNT RESIN.

MISCALCULATION? I'VE COME HERE TO MAKE HECATE MY BRIDE, JUST LIKE YOU WANTED!
IT'S THE FIRST TIME I'VE BLUNDERED SO BADLY. THE WORLD'S A TOUGH PLACE TO LIVE IN IF A WITCH MAKES SUCH A SERIOUS MISCALCULATION.
I SEE... YOU CAN'T USE ME NOW THAT MY UNCLE'S THROWN ME OUT.
SILENCE! WHAT I WANTED WAS THE THRONE, THE CROWN! I HAVE NO USE FOR DEPOSED PRINCES!
BUT SINCE YOU CAME ALL THIS WAY, WHY NOT MEET MY HUSBAND, GREAT DEMON KING SATAN?
I'LL DO WHATEVER IT TAKES.
I HAVEN'T GIVEN UP HOPE, THOUGH. I WANT GOLDLAND.

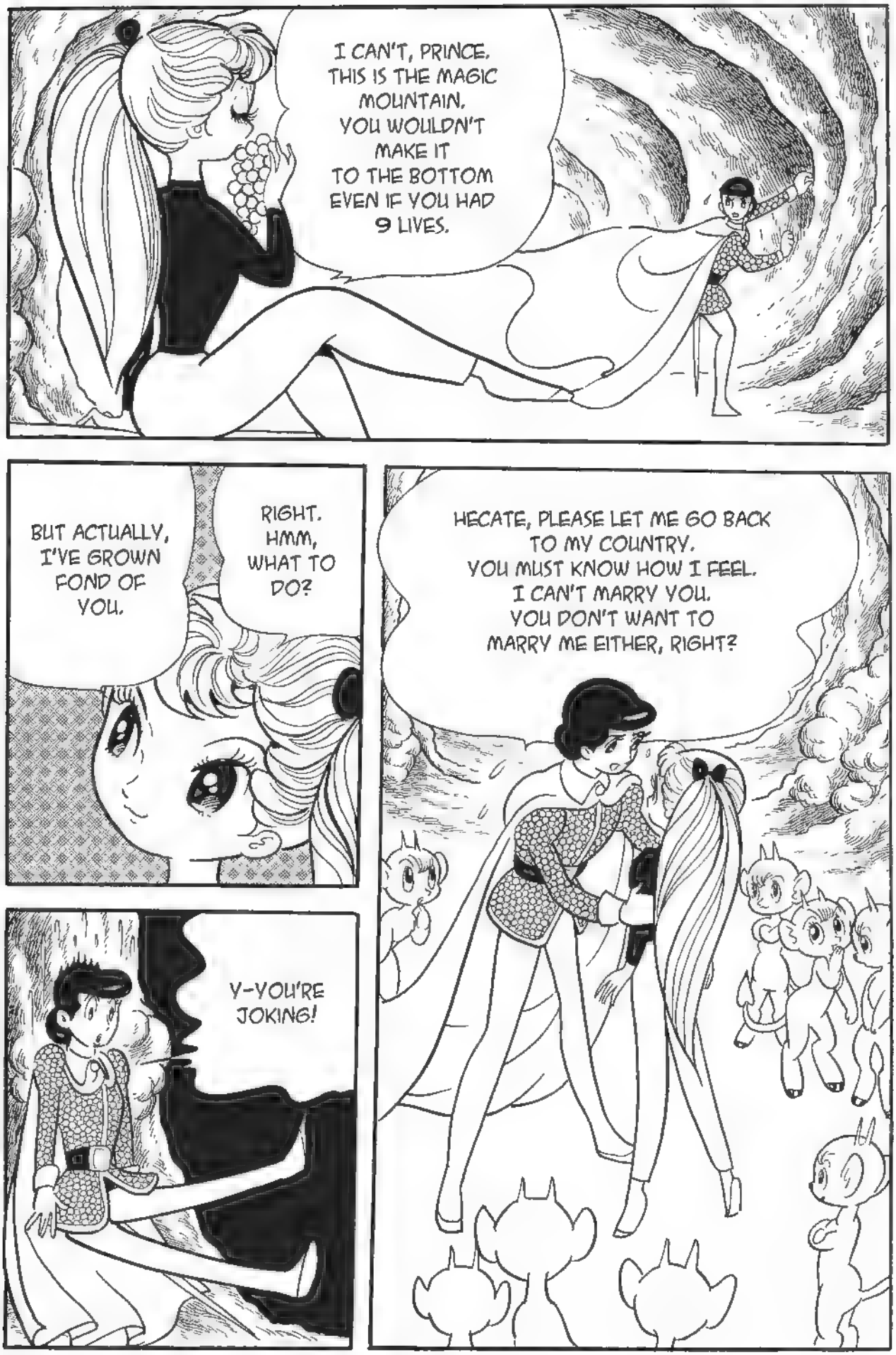
MADAME HELL? WHO'S THE HUMAN?
I CALL FOR THEE, O GREAT SATAN! APPEAR!
RRRRROAR
THIS IS MY DAUGHTER'S FIANCE.
IT'S BEEN A WHILE!
I AM THE RULER OF ALL DARKNESS AND EVIL, KING SATAN.
I DON'T CARE IF HE'S A FIANCE OR A FINANCIER, IT'S RUDE TO SIT ASTRIDE A HORSE IN MY PRESENCE.

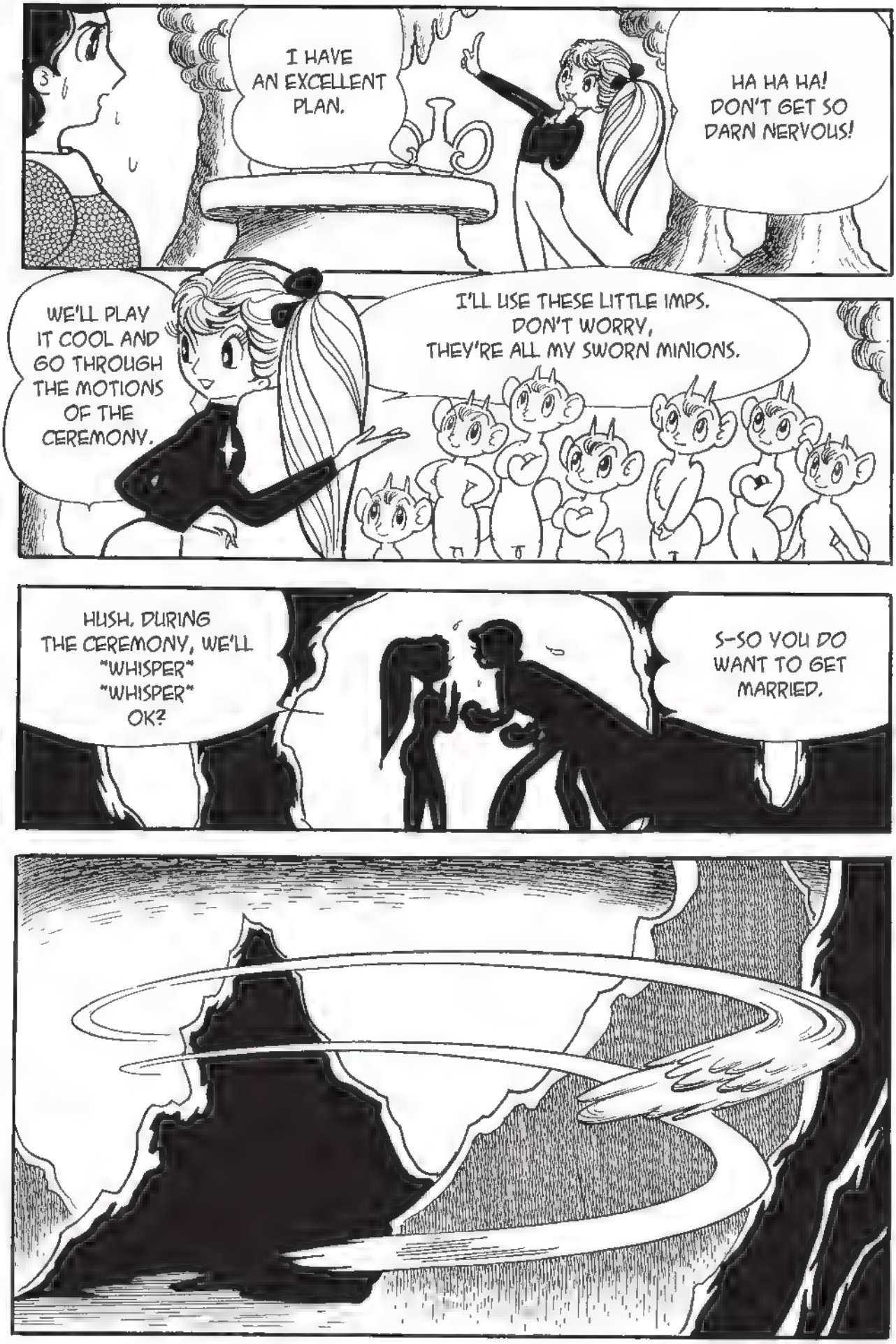
HOW IMPUDENT! TURN INTO A FROG!
O MAGNIFICENT, OMNIPOTENT DEMON KING SATAN, CAN YOU ARRANGE A WEDDING CEREMONY IN GOLDLAND'S CASTLE THAT WILL GO UNNOTICED BY THE INHABITANTS? BY TURNING THEM INTO STONE OR SOMETHING?
HEH HEH, YOU'VE ALREADY GOT A PLAN, EH? I MIGHT BE WILLING TO HELP.
WHAT?!

A WEDDING FOR A DEMON AND A HUMAN?
GREAT IDEA!
WE'LL HAVE PRINCE FRANZ MARRY MY DAUGHTER HECATE INSIDE THE CASTLE.
I WANT YOU TO BRING ME THE MOST BEAUTIFUL, GENTLE GIRL IN ALL THE LAND AS A HUMAN SACRIFICE.
W-WHAT WILL YOU DO TO HER?
HOW AMUSING. I'LL LEND A HAND. BUT IN RETURN...
T-THERE IS ONE, YES, A GIRL I'M SURE YOU'LL LOVE, O KING.
YES, SHE'D BE A PERFECT SACRIFICIAL LAMB.
TURN HER FLESH INTO DEMONIC POTIONS.

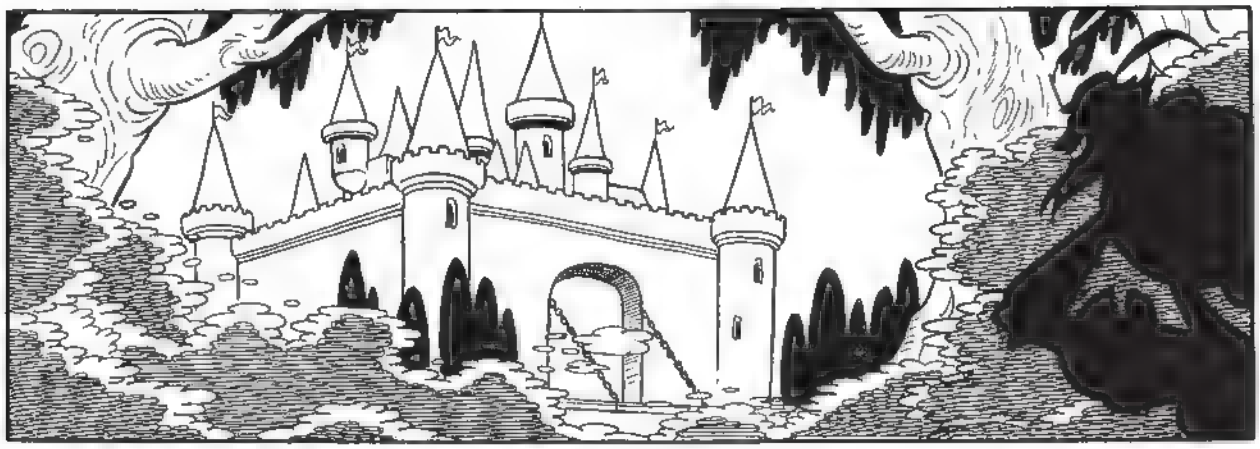

THEN IT'S SETTLED. NOW I'LL TEACH YOU THE METHOD THAT TURNS PEOPLE INTO STONES.
YOU MONSTER! I'LL RUN YOU THROUGH IF YOU DARE HARM MY SUBJECTS!
I WON'T LET YOU!
FOOLISH MAN! YOU DARE TURN YOUR SWORD ON THE KING OF DEMONS? IF YOU WEREN'T BETROTHED TO MADAME HELL'S DAUGHTER, I'D TURN YOU INTO A FROG, TOO!
OH, CURSES...

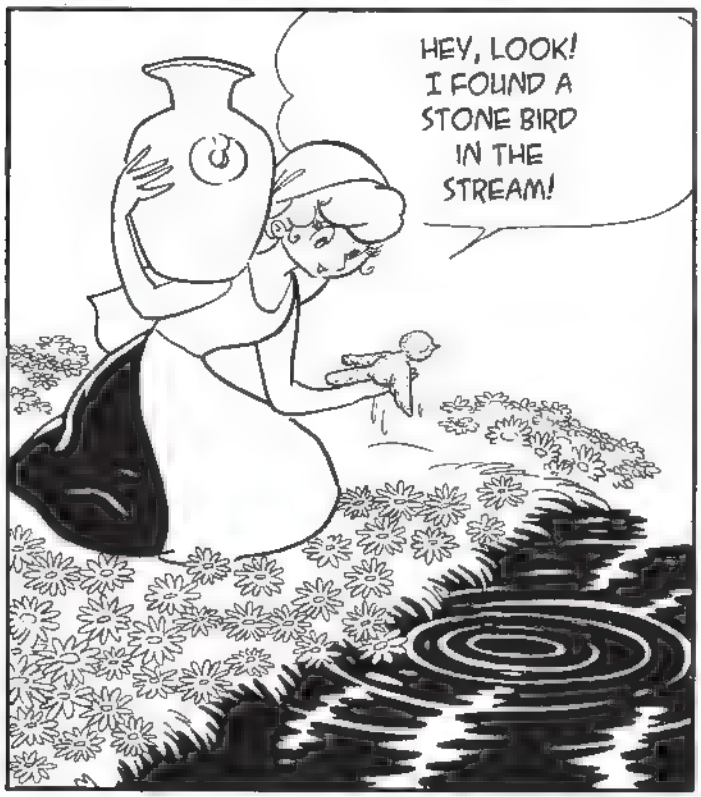
AH! HECATE!
AM I STILL ON MOUNT RESIN? HECATE, UH, WHY ARE YOU CHANGED SO?
MOM TOLD ME TO KEEP YOU ON THE MOUNTAIN UNTIL THE WEDDING DAY. SHE DOESN'T WANT YOU RUNNING AWAY, SO I'M GUARDING YOU.
I'M GOING INSANE! LET ME OUT OF THIS PLACE!
I WAS KIDDING AROUND AS A GOAT.
OH, NO!
THAT'S NO WAY FOR A BRIDE TO BE.

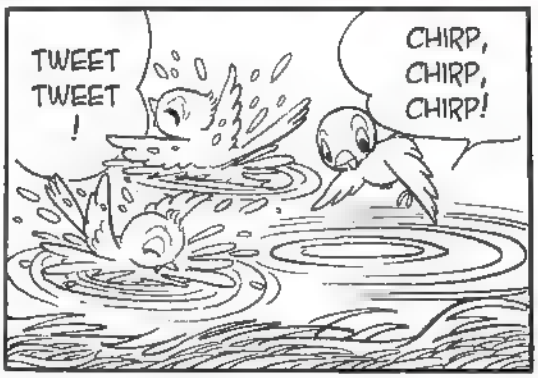

I CAN'T, PRINCE. THIS IS THE MAGIC MOUNTAIN. YOU WOULDN'T MAKE IT TO THE BOTTOM EVEN IF YOU HAD 9 LIVES.
BUT ACTUALLY, I'VE GROWN FOND OF YOU.
RIGHT. HMM, WHAT TO DO?
HECATE, PLEASE LET ME GO BACK TO MY COUNTRY. YOU MUST KNOW HOW I FEEL. I CAN'T MARRY YOU. YOU DON'T WANT TO MARRY ME EITHER, RIGHT?
Y-YOU'RE JOKING!

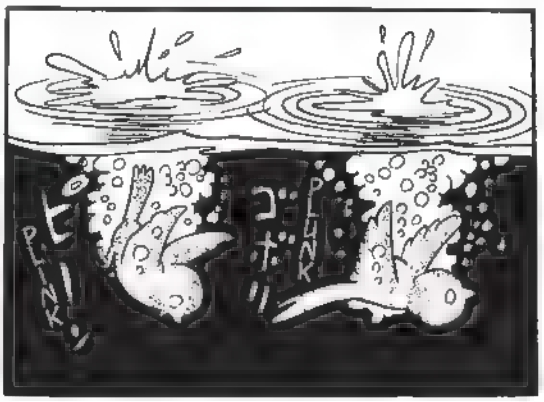

I HAVE AN EXCELLENT PLAN.
HA HA HA! DON'T GET SO DARN NERVOUS!
WE'LL PLAY IT COOL AND GO THROUGH THE MOTIONS OF THE CEREMONY.
I'LL USE THESE LITTLE IMPS. DON'T WORRY, THEY'RE ALL MY SWORN MINIONS.
HUSH. DURING THE CEREMONY, WE'LL "WHISPER" "WHISPER" OK?
S-SO YOU DO WANT TO GET MARRIED.

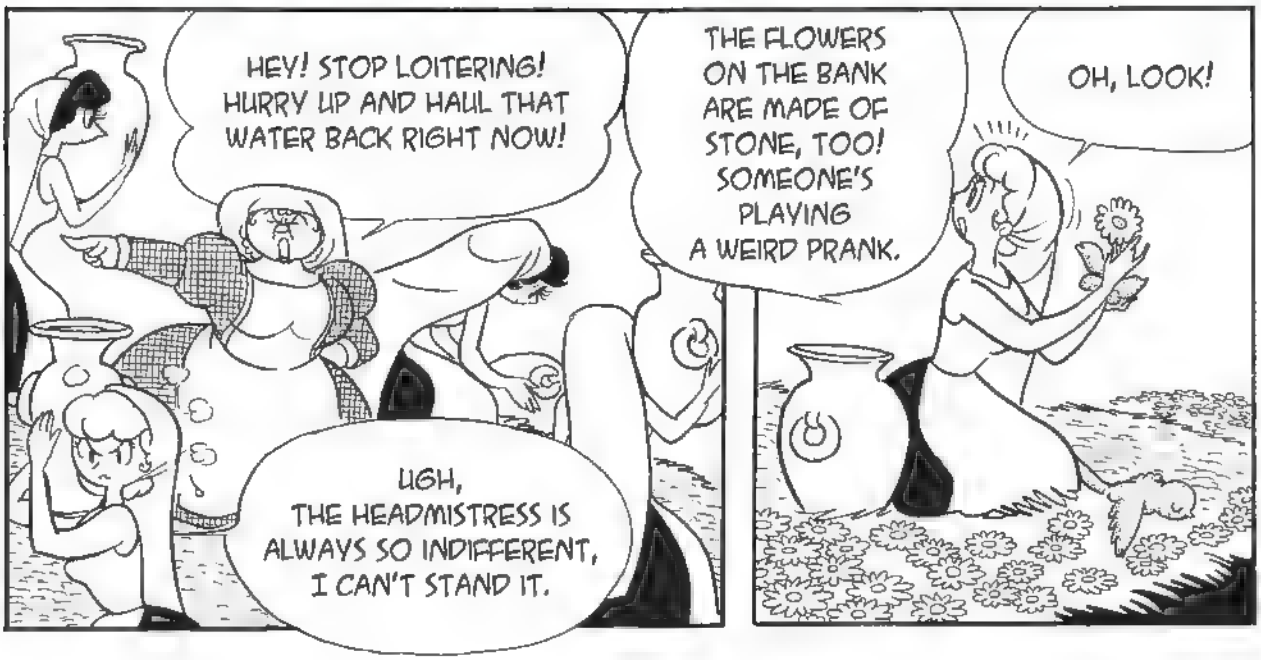
THIS CREEK FLOWS INTO THE CASTLE GARDENS.
RIGHT AROUND HERE, KING SATAN.
SNAP
HEH HEH. I'LL POUR THIS POTION INTO THE CREEK. ANYONE THAT DRINKS FROM IT WILL BE TURNED TO STONE WITHIN 3 SECONDS. WATCH.

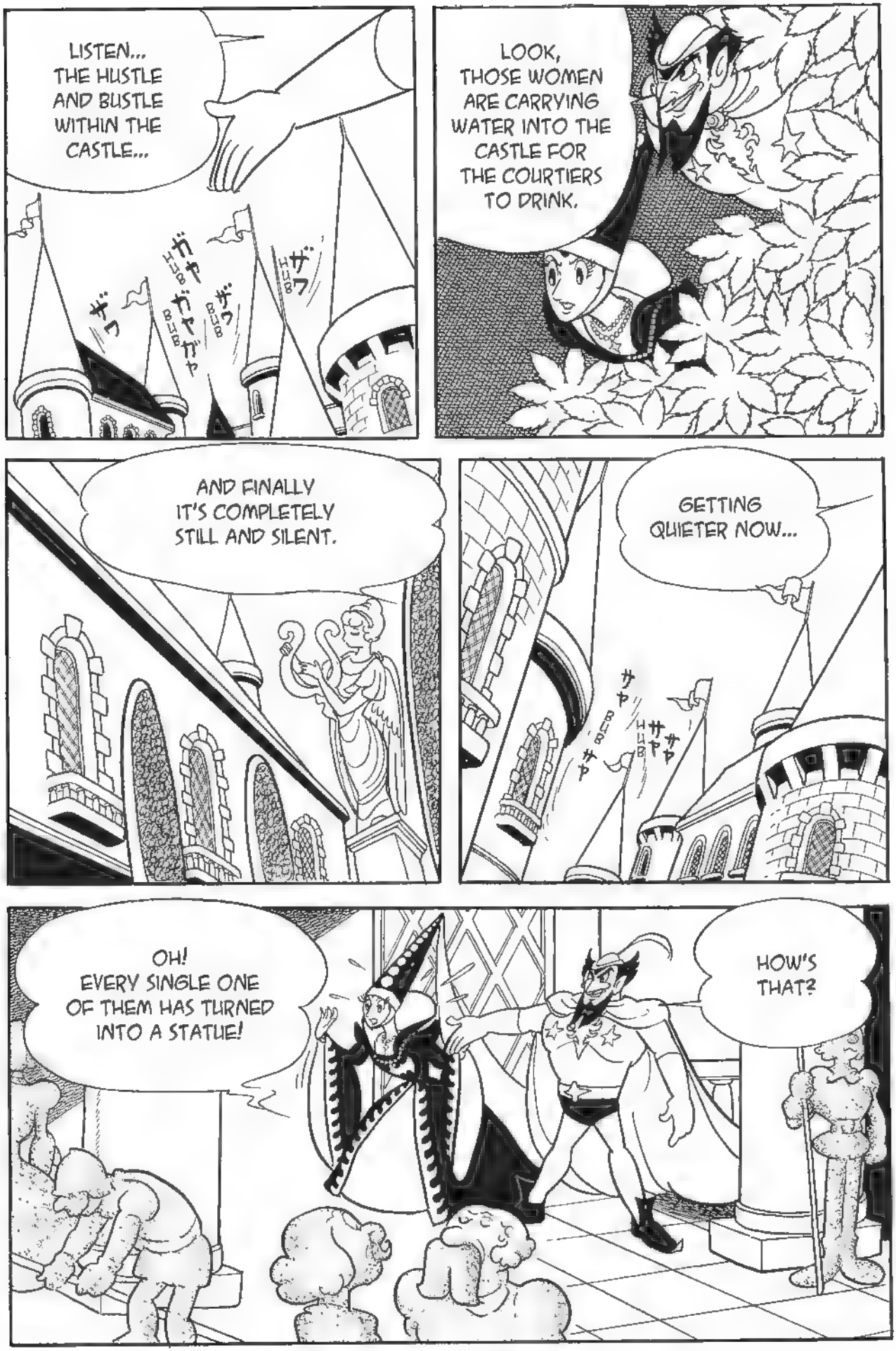



HEY, LOOK! I FOUND A STONE BIRD IN THE STREAM!


TWEET TWEET !
CHIRP, CHIRP, CHIRP!


PLINK!
ゴボ!!
PLINK


HEY! STOP LOITERING! HURRY UP AND HAUL THAT WATER BACK RIGHT NOW!
UGH, THE HEADMISTRESS IS ALWAYS SO INDIFFERENT, I CAN'T STAND IT.
THE FLOWERS ON THE BANK ARE MADE OF STONE, TOO! SOMEONE'S PLAYING A WEIRD PRANK.
OH, LOOK!

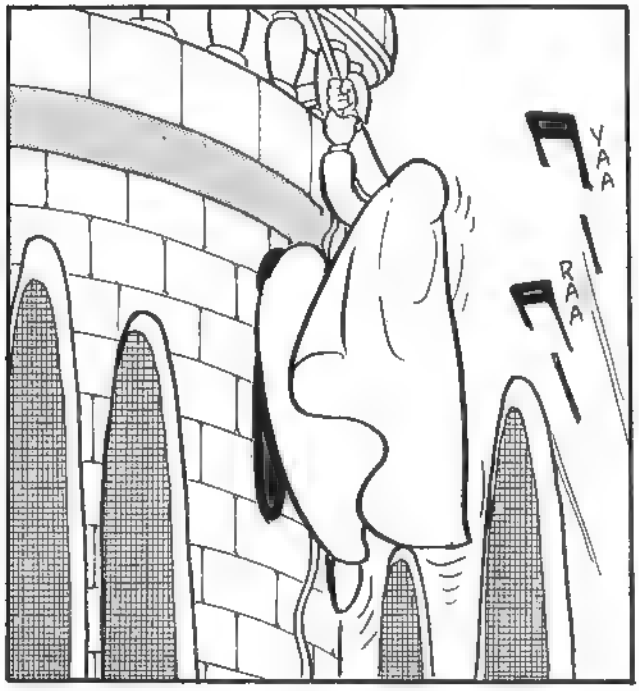

LISTEN... THE HUSTLE AND BUSTLE WITHIN THE CASTLE...
ガヤ ガヤガヤ ザワ ザワ ザワ
LOOK, THOSE WOMEN ARE CARRYING WATER INTO THE CASTLE FOR THE COURTIERS TO DRINK.
AND FINALLY IT'S COMPLETELY STILL AND SILENT.
GETTING QUIETER NOW...
サヤ サヤ サヤ サヤ
OH! EVERY SINGLE ONE OF THEM HAS TURNED INTO A STATUE!
HOW'S THAT?

AH! THIS IS THE MAN WHO OPPOSED THE WEDDING!
YOUR POWER IS MONUMENTAL, O GREAT KING SATAN.
HEE HEE! HO HO HO!
WONDERFUL! I CAN DO AS I PLEASE IN THIS SILENT CASTLE!
TRA LA LA!
SERVES YOU RIGHT! NOW YOU'LL BE FORCED TO WATCH THE CEREMONY WITH A STONY GAZE!
IT'S YOUR WILL, MANIFEST. IF YOU DIE, OR IF BLOOD FROM A HEART BOUND BY TRUE LOVE FALLS ON THESE STONES, THEY'LL REVERT TO THEIR HUMAN STATE.
I'LL GO FETCH THE PRINCE AND MY GIRL.
BUT BE CAREFUL.

YES, YES, I'M WELL AWARE. THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR YOUR HELP.
RIGHT. DON'T FORGET TO BRING ME THAT PARTY FAVOR.
JUST LIKE SAPPHIRE'S MOTHER!
HO HO HO!
IF NOT TOUCHED BY LOVE'S BLOOD DROPS, THEY'LL STAY AS THEY ARE—MERE ROCKS!
HO HO HO HO HO!
THAT BEAUTIFUL, GENTLE, ODIOUS GIRL...
SAPPHIRE!!
NOW I'LL GET THAT OFFERING FOR THE DEVIL KING!
HO HO HO! HEE HEE HEE!

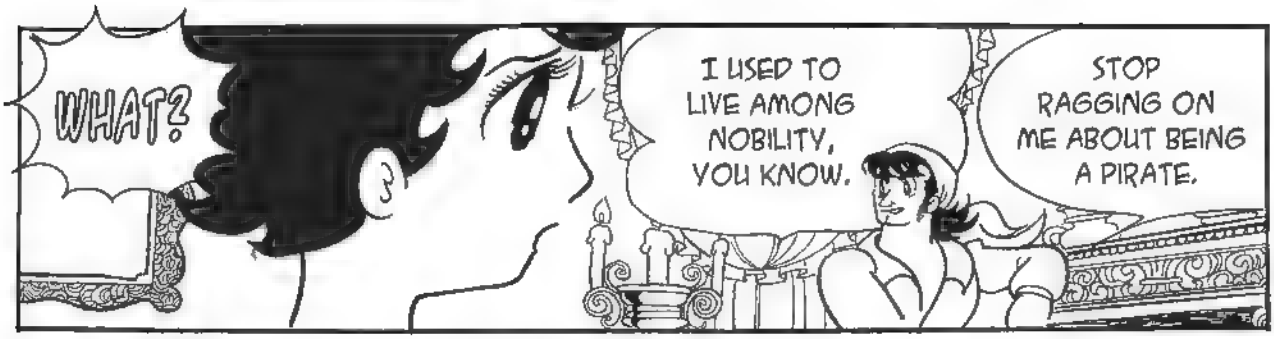
Chapter 21

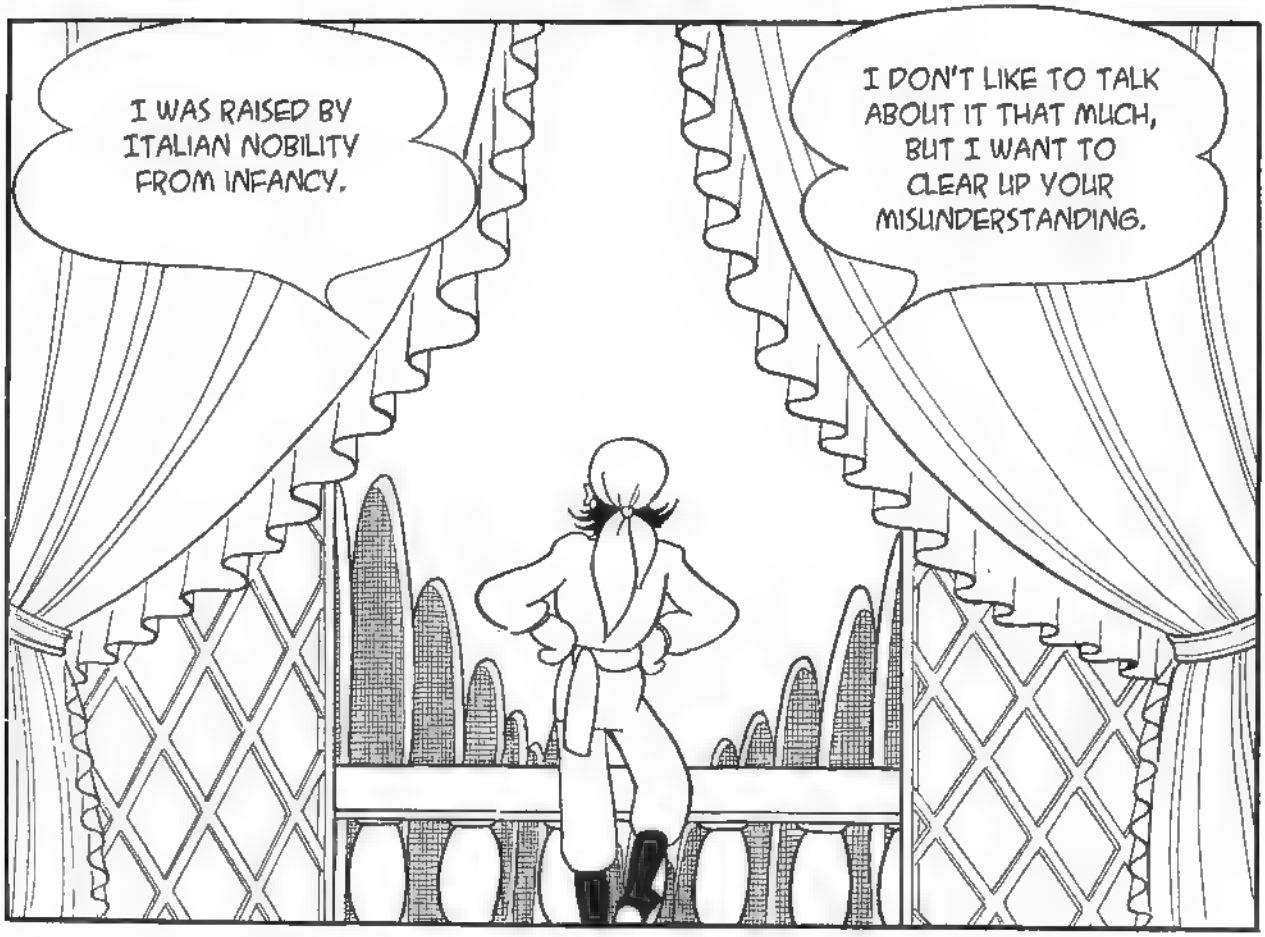
Two Slumbers

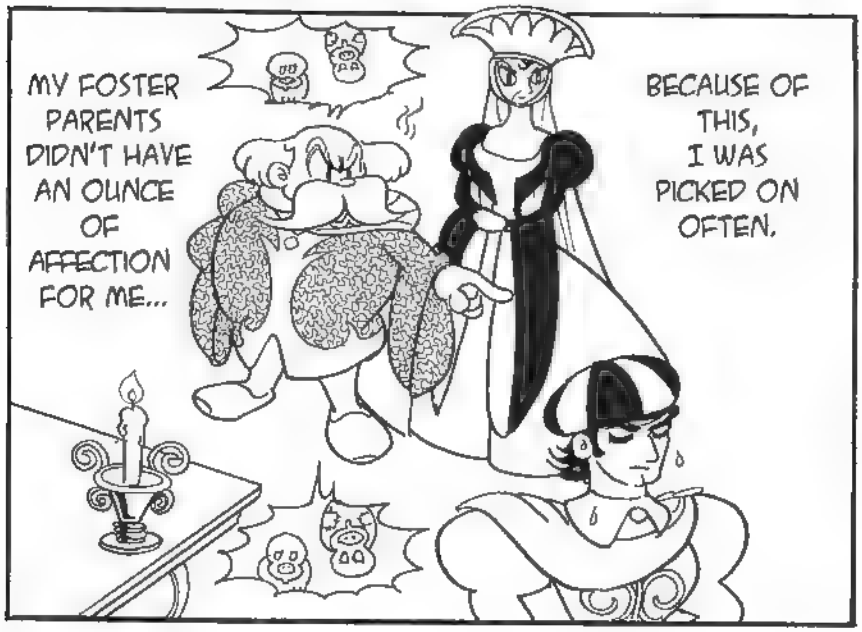

YAA
RAA

RAAAH
RAAAH

GASP
SAPPHIRE, DON'T BE SO BLUE.
REALLY. HOW NICE.
QUITE A RUCKUS YOU GOT GOING ON. I WAS ABLE TO SLIP IN JUST BY WEARING A VEIL.
SHUT UP!
DOESN'T LOOK LIKE THE SIEGE WILL END ANYTIME SOON. SHALL I CALL MY MEN TO ARMS?
I GREETED YOU AS A GENTLEMAN. I WON'T FORGIVE RUDENESS.
DAMN PIRATE.
IF I MAKE YOU WEAR THAT BLONDE WIG, WILL YOU TURN GENTLE AGAIN?
STOP ACTING LIKE A TOUGH GUY.


WHAT?
I USED TO LIVE AMONG NOBILITY, YOU KNOW.
STOP RAGGING ON ME ABOUT BEING A PIRATE.

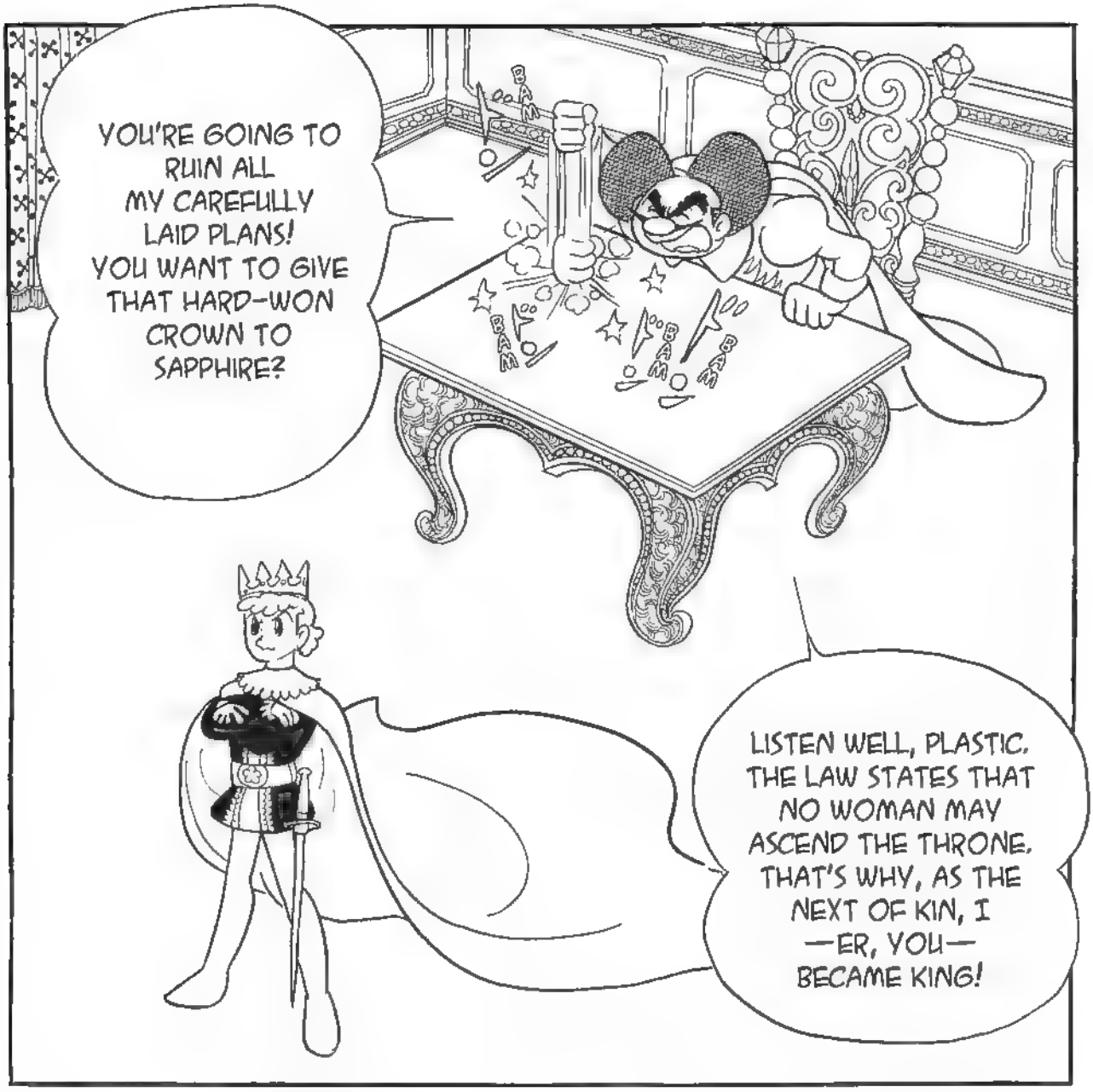

I WAS RAISED BY ITALIAN NOBILITY FROM INFANCY.
I DON'T LIKE TO TALK ABOUT IT THAT MUCH, BUT I WANT TO CLEAR UP YOUR MISUNDERSTANDING.


MY FOSTER PARENTS DIDN'T HAVE AN OUNCE OF AFFECTION FOR ME...
BECAUSE OF THIS, I WAS PICKED ON OFTEN.

BUT I WASN'T THEIR REAL SON.

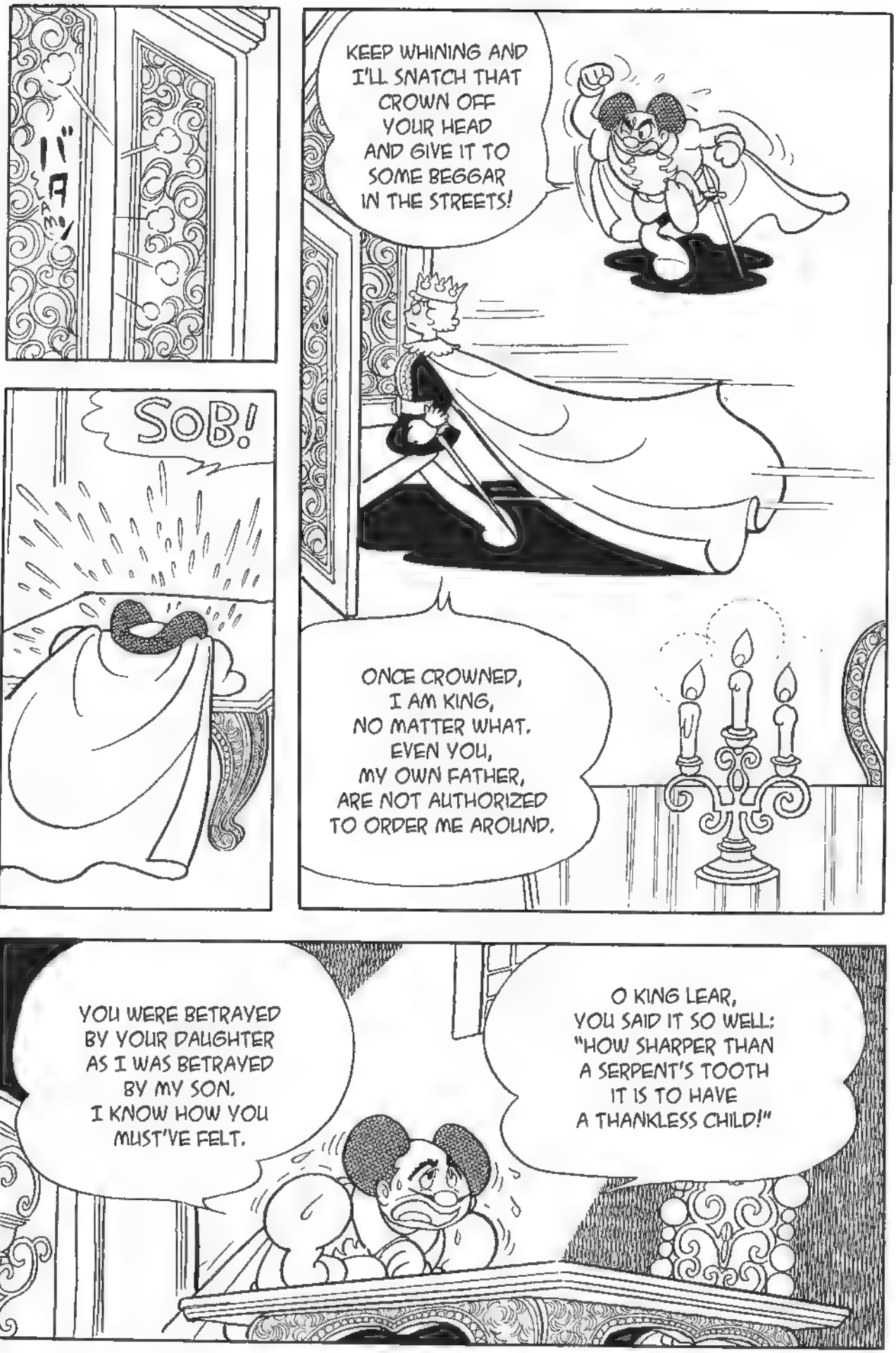
APPARENTLY I WAS BORN A PRINCE OF A CERTAIN KINGDOM, BUT WHEN I WAS STILL A BABE,
ONE DAY, I OVERHEARD THEM TALKING ABOUT MY LINEAGE.
A RELATIVE DECIDED HE HATED ME AND DUMPED ME ONTO THAT ITALIAN FAMILY.
I TEAMED UP WITH PIRATES, THINKING I'D DISCOVER MY BIRTHPLACE IF I SAILED AROUND THE WORLD.
I CURSED MY FATE AND STOLE AWAY FROM THAT MANSION IN ORDER TO SEARCH FOR MY HOMELAND.

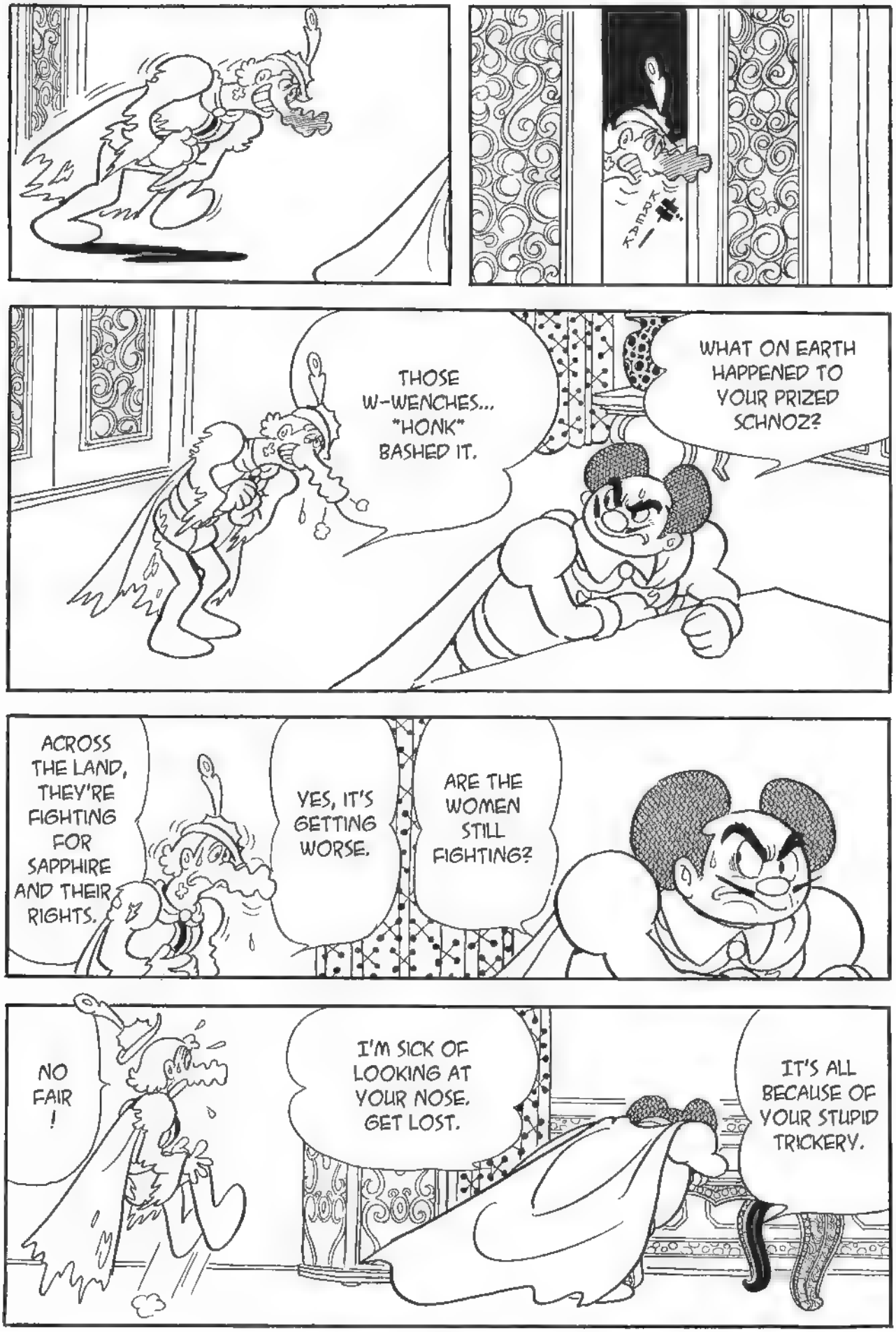
SAPPHIRE, I LOVE YOU.
I CONFESS,
YOU'VE STOLEN MY HEART.
I'LL DO ANYTHING TO
MAKE YOU HAPPY.
OH, BLOOD.
WE'RE TWO OF A KIND,
BATTLING A STAR-
CROSSED DESTINY...
WHAT ARE
YOU
SAYING
?!


YOU'RE GOING TO RUIN ALL MY CAREFULLY LAID PLANS! YOU WANT TO GIVE THAT HARD-WON CROWN TO SAPPHIRE?
BAM
BAM
BAM
BAM
BAM
LISTEN WELL, PLASTIC. THE LAW STATES THAT NO WOMAN MAY ASCEND THE THRONE. THAT'S WHY, AS THE NEXT OF KIN, I —ER, YOU— BECAME KING!

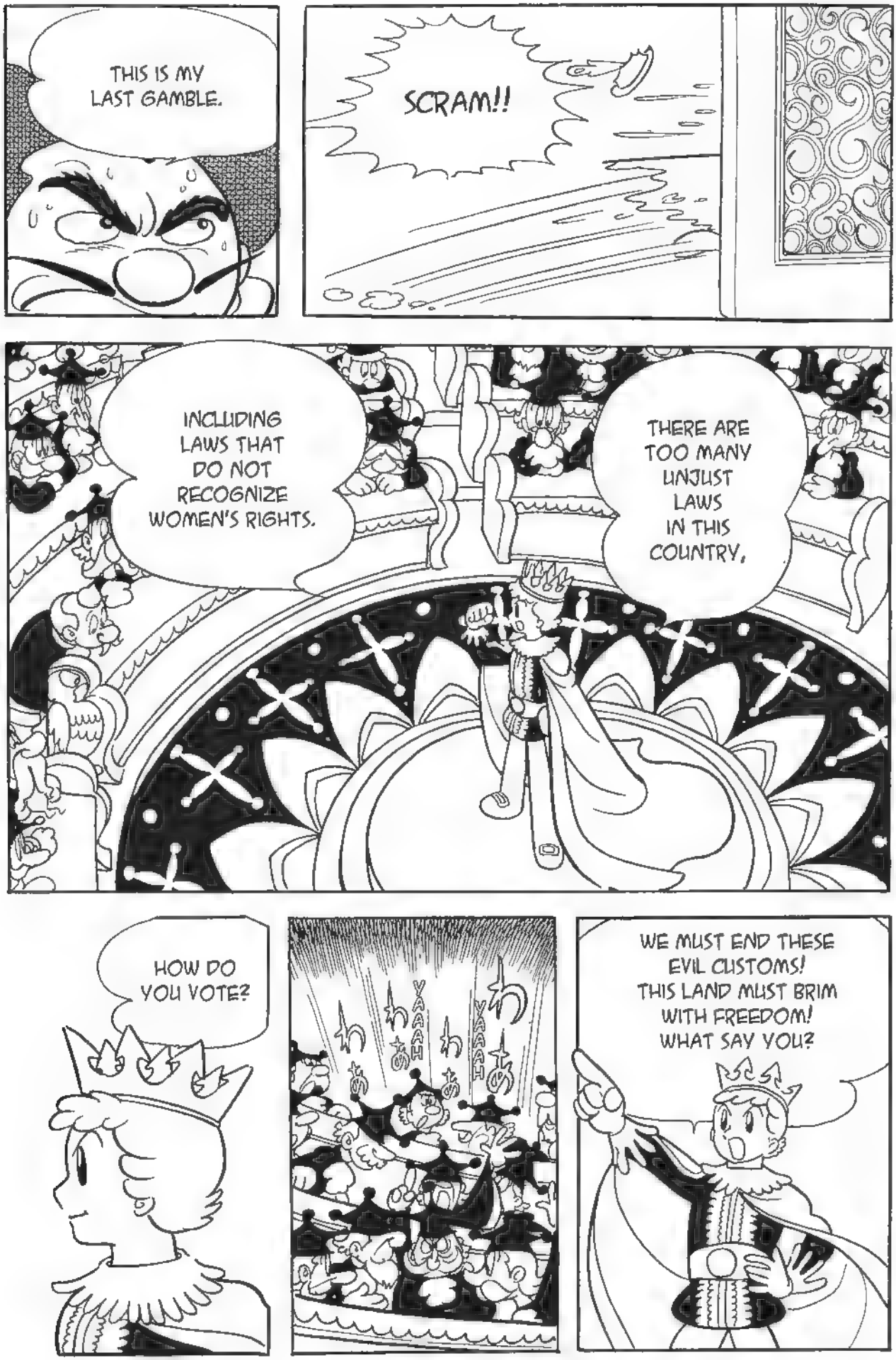
YOU MAY BE MY SON, BUT I'LL NEVER FORGIVE YOU!
IS THAT HOW IT'S GONNA BE? DO YOU REJECT MY LOVE, YOU INGRATE?

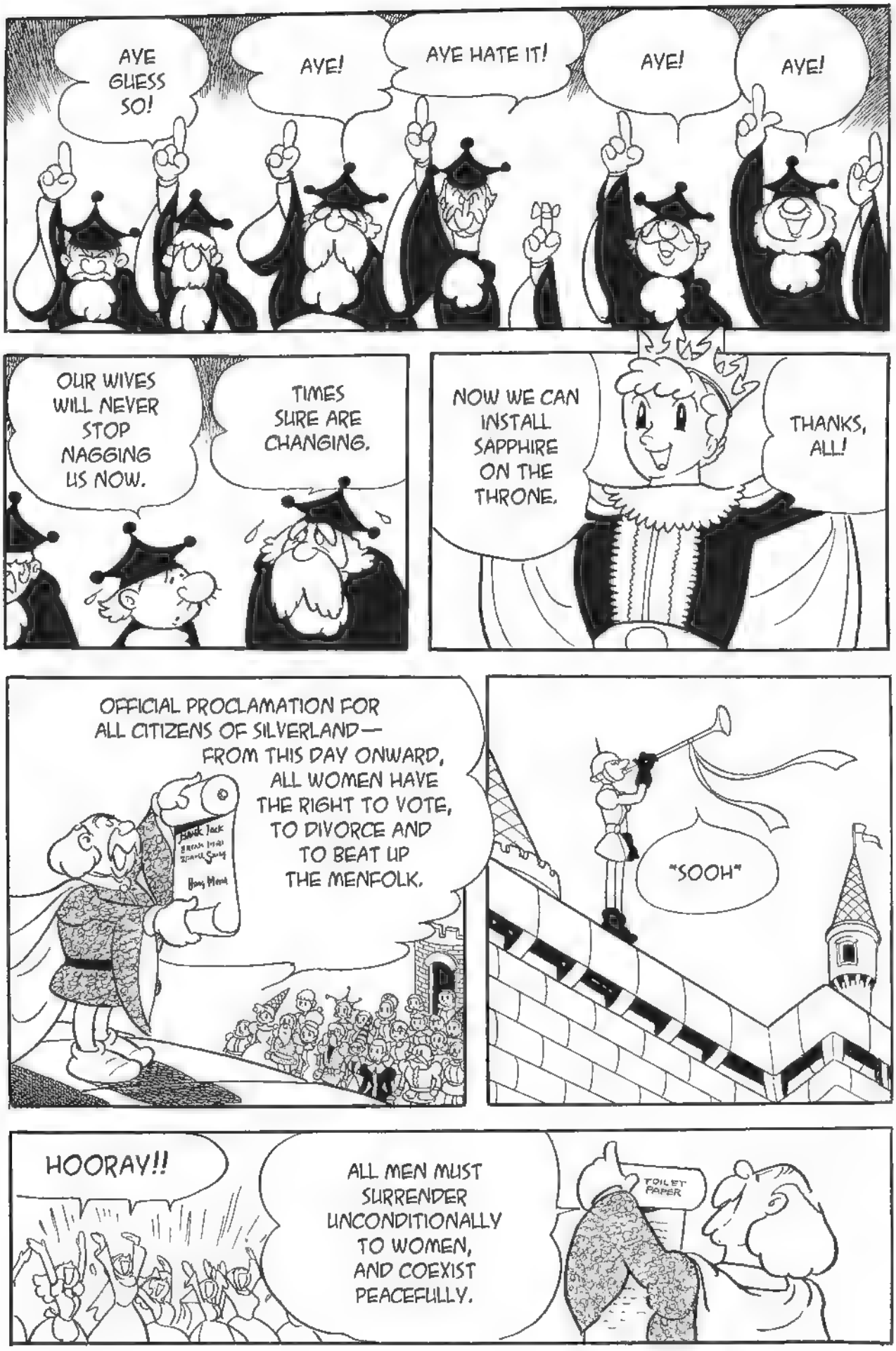
IT'S MISOGYNISTIC FOR THAT LAW TO EXIST! OPEN YOUR EYES, FATHER.


SLAM!
KEEP WHINING AND I'LL SNATCH THAT CROWN OFF YOUR HEAD AND GIVE IT TO SOME BEGGAR IN THE STREETS!
SOB!
ONCE CROWNED, I AM KING, NO MATTER WHAT. EVEN YOU, MY OWN FATHER, ARE NOT AUTHORIZED TO ORDER ME AROUND.
YOU WERE BETRAYED BY YOUR DAUGHTER AS I WAS BETRAYED BY MY SON. I KNOW HOW YOU MUST'VE FELT.
O KING LEAR, YOU SAID IT SO WELL: "HOW SHARPER THAN A SERPENT'S TOOTH IT IS TO HAVE A THANKLESS CHILD!"


KRNAK
THOSE W-WENCHES... "HONK" BASHED IT.
WHAT ON EARTH HAPPENED TO YOUR PRIZED SCHNOZ?
ACROSS THE LAND, THEY'RE FIGHTING FOR SAPPHIRE AND THEIR RIGHTS.
YES, IT'S GETTING WORSE.
ARE THE WOMEN STILL FIGHTING?
NO FAIR !
I'M SICK OF LOOKING AT YOUR NOSE. GET LOST.
IT'S ALL BECAUSE OF YOUR STUPID TRICKERY.

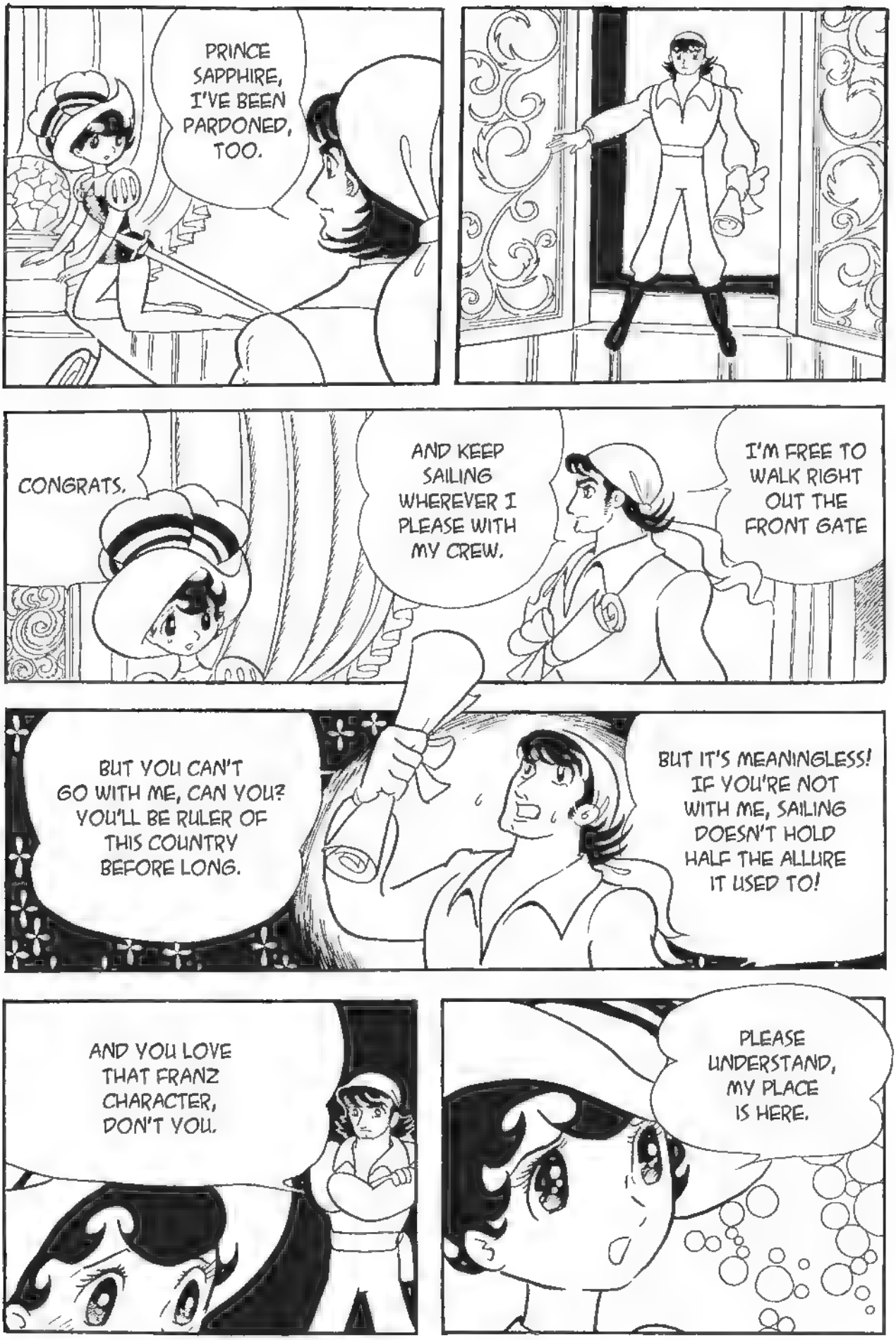
THIS LEAVES YOU ONLY ONE CHOICE.
WHAT ?!
IT ALL STARTED WITH YOUR PLANS FOR THAT DOLTISH SON OF YOURS!
ER...
THE WOMEN WILL GIVE UP AND THE CROWN WILL BE SAFE.
IF SAPPHIRE'S GONE, EVERYTHING WILL BE FINE.
WE MUST WIPE OUT SAPPHIRE.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
IF YOU FAIL, NEVER COME NEAR ME AGAIN.
MOI? NOT A CHANCE !
YOU DO IT, NYLON.
WHO'LL DO IT?

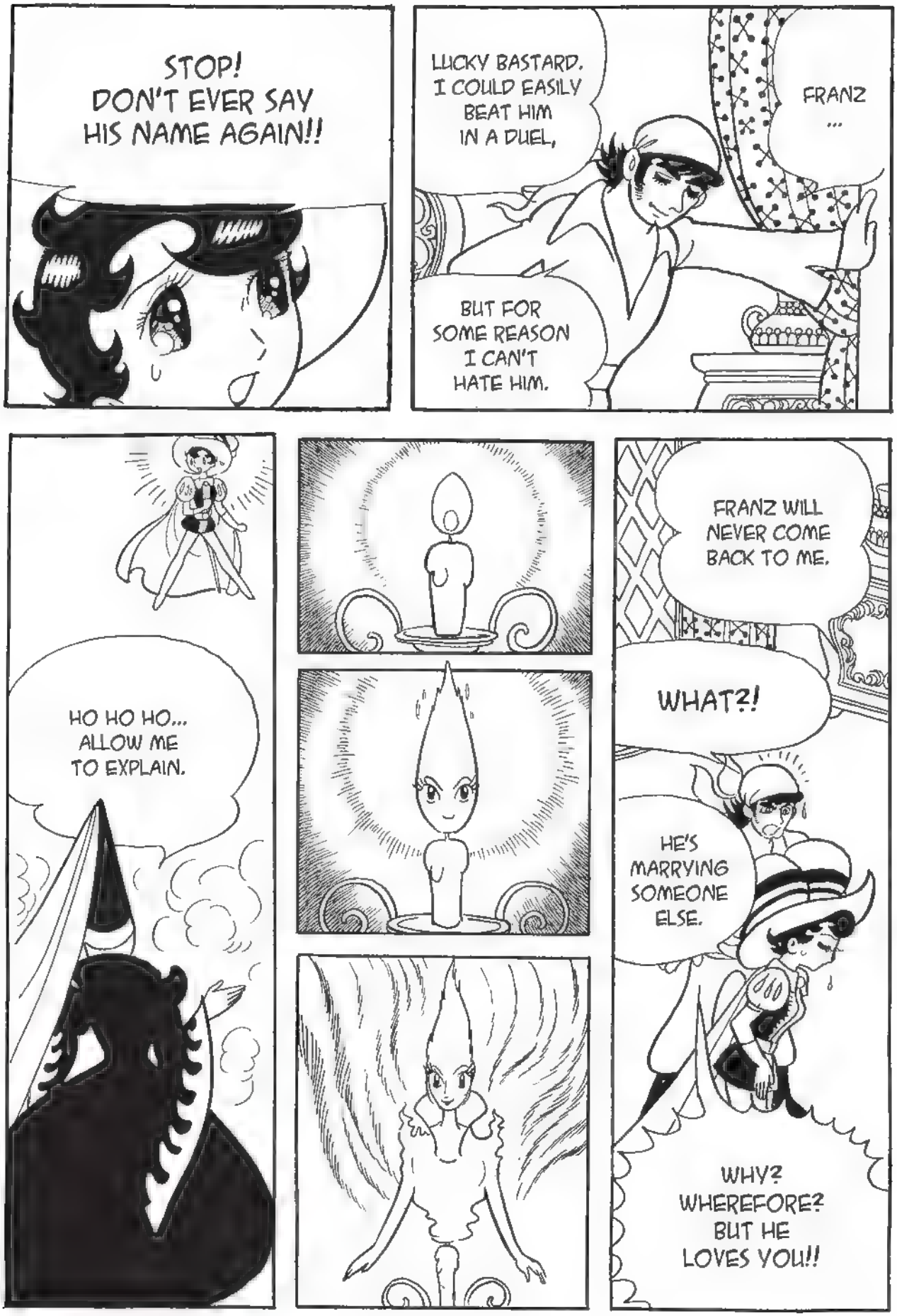

THIS IS MY LAST GAMBLE.
SCRAM!!
INCLUDING LAWS THAT DO NOT RECOGNIZE WOMEN'S RIGHTS.
THERE ARE TOO MANY UNJUST LAWS IN THIS COUNTRY,
HOW DO YOU VOTE?
わあ
YAAAH
WE MUST END THESE EVIL CUSTOMS! THIS LAND MUST BRIM WITH FREEDOM! WHAT SAY YOU?


AYE GUESS SO!
AYE!
AYE HATE IT!
AYE!
AYE!
OUR WIVES WILL NEVER STOP NAGGING US NOW.
TIMES SURE ARE CHANGING.
NOW WE CAN INSTALL SAPPHIRE ON THE THRONE.
THANKS, ALL!
OFFICIAL PROCLAMATION FOR ALL CITIZENS OF SILVERLAND— FROM THIS DAY ONWARD, ALL WOMEN HAVE THE RIGHT TO VOTE, TO DIVORCE AND TO BEAT UP THE MENFOLK.
"SOOH"
HOORAY!!
ALL MEN MUST SURRENDER UNCONDITIONALLY TO WOMEN, AND COEXIST PEACEFULLY.
TOILET PAPER

THERE YOU ARE!
DARLING!
OH, HONEY, COME OUT!
YAY! MAKE-UP TIME!
I'LL NEVER FIGHT WITH WOMEN AGAIN.
HERE'S THE KID, HUN.
COME HOME. THERE'S PILES OF LAUNDRY.
HOW ARE YOU?
ヒヒーン
ブルルルッ
NEIGH
Special Pardon
King Plastic hereby decrees all political prisoners now be freed.

YES! WE WERE JUST DECLARED INNOCENT AND FREED FROM PRISON!
OH! IT'S THE DOCTOR AND THE NURSE!
WELCOME BACK.
IT'S BEEN SO LONG. BUT NOW WE'RE SUDDENLY PARDONED.
WE WERE JAILED FOR LYING TO THE PEOPLE ABOUT SHAPPHIRE'SH GENDER.
DAMN, THIS IS HORRIBLE. THAT IDIOT KING KEEPS POSTING THESE ARBITRARY PROCLAMATIONS. IF I DON'T KILL SAPPHIRE HE'LL EVEN GIVE HER THE CROWN.


PRINCE SAPPHIRE, I'VE BEEN PARDONED, TOO.
CONGRATS.
AND KEEP SAILING WHEREVER I PLEASE WITH MY CREW.
I'M FREE TO WALK RIGHT OUT THE FRONT GATE
BUT YOU CAN'T GO WITH ME, CAN YOU? YOU'LL BE RULER OF THIS COUNTRY BEFORE LONG.
BUT IT'S MEANINGLESS! IF YOU'RE NOT WITH ME, SAILING DOESN'T HOLD HALF THE ALLURE IT USED TO!
AND YOU LOVE THAT FRANZ CHARACTER, DON'T YOU.
PLEASE UNDERSTAND, MY PLACE IS HERE.


STOP!
DON'T EVER SAY
HIS NAME AGAIN!!
LUCKY BASTARD.
I COULD EASILY
BEAT HIM
IN A DUEL,
BUT FOR
SOME REASON
I CAN'T
HATE HIM.
FRANZ
...
HO HO HO...
ALLOW ME
TO EXPLAIN.
FRANZ WILL
NEVER COME
BACK TO ME.
WHAT?!
HE'S
MARRYING
SOMEONE
ELSE.
WHY?
WHEREFORE?
BUT HE
LOVES YOU!!

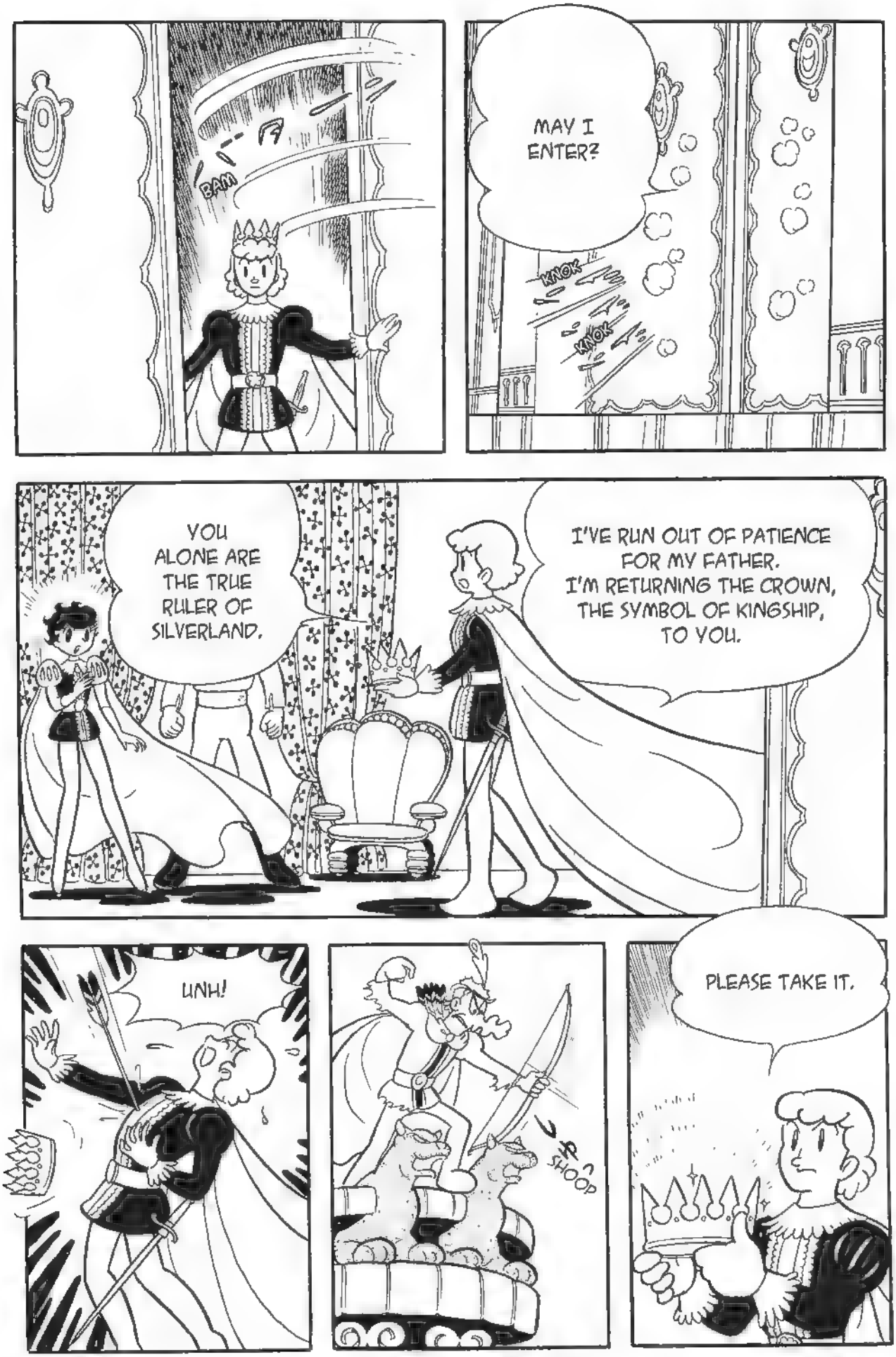
HE LOVES YOU, BUT HE CAN NEVER BE WITH YOU. THE WEDDING DAY DRAWS NEAR. HE'LL BE BOUND TO MY DAUGHTER!
WHEN YOU WERE ABOUT TO BE EXECUTED, PRINCE FRANZ MADE A PACT WITH THIS WITCH— I'D SAVE YOUR LIFE IF HE MARRIED MY DAUGHTER.
H-HE DID IT TO SAVE ME? OH, FRANZ!!
THAT'S IN 3 DAYS!
THERE WILL BE A CEREMONY IN HIS CASTLE ON FRIDAY THE 13TH.

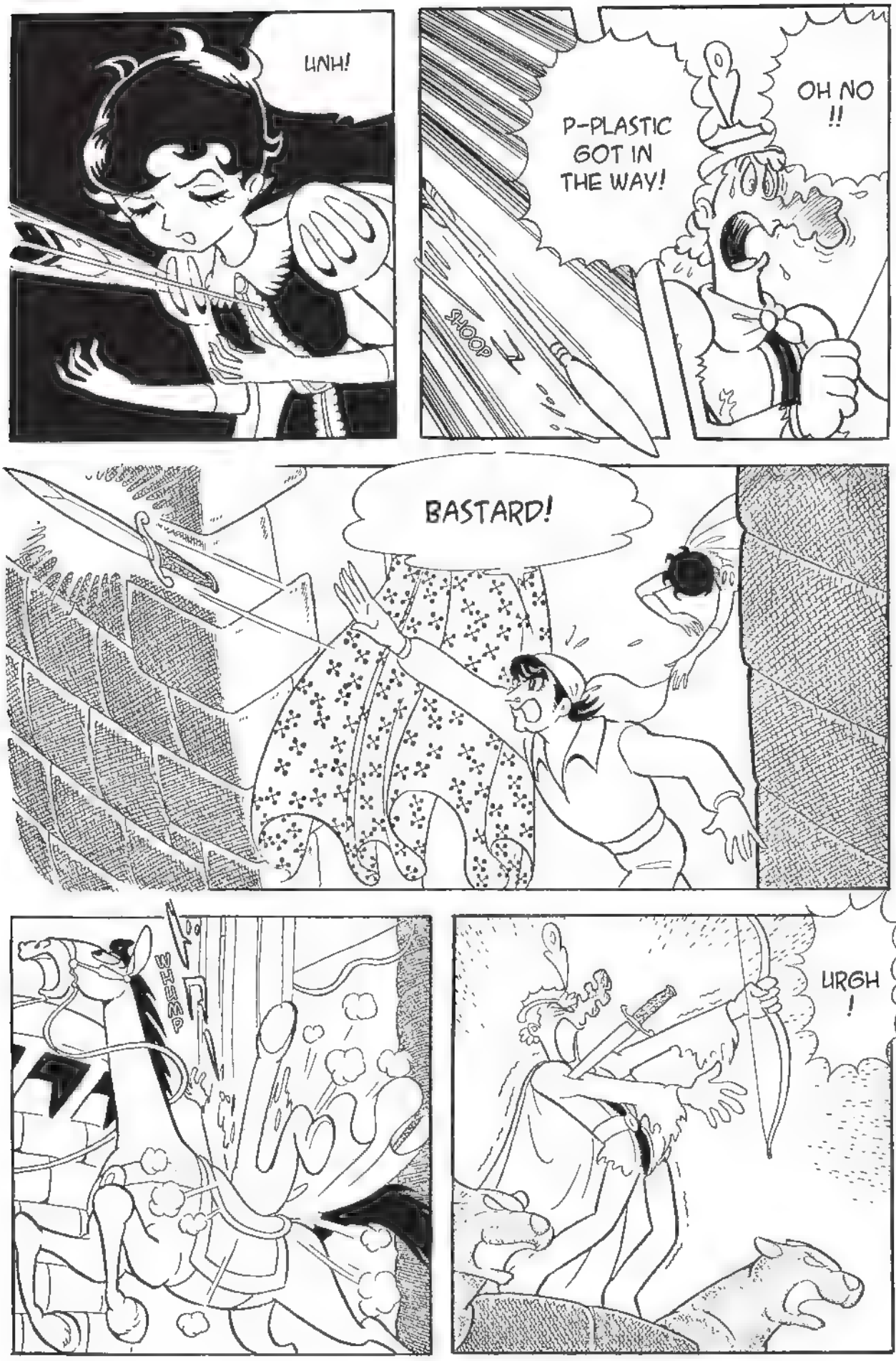
I'VE COME HERE TO INVITE YOU TO THE WEDDING CEREMONY. HO HO HO...
"SOB" I...
SAPPHIRE, WHAT'RE YOU SAYING? DON'T LISTEN TO THIS OLD BAG.
GET OUT, GRANNY!
OH MY, HOW RUDE!
FINE... I ACCEPT!
I'LL BE THERE TO SEE IT MYSELF!

SO YOU'RE THE ONE MAKING SAPPHIRE SUFFER. I'LL MAKE YOU PAY...
ACK!
ボッ
BLAZE
FLAME, MAIM!
STOP!
GAH! HOT HOT HOT!

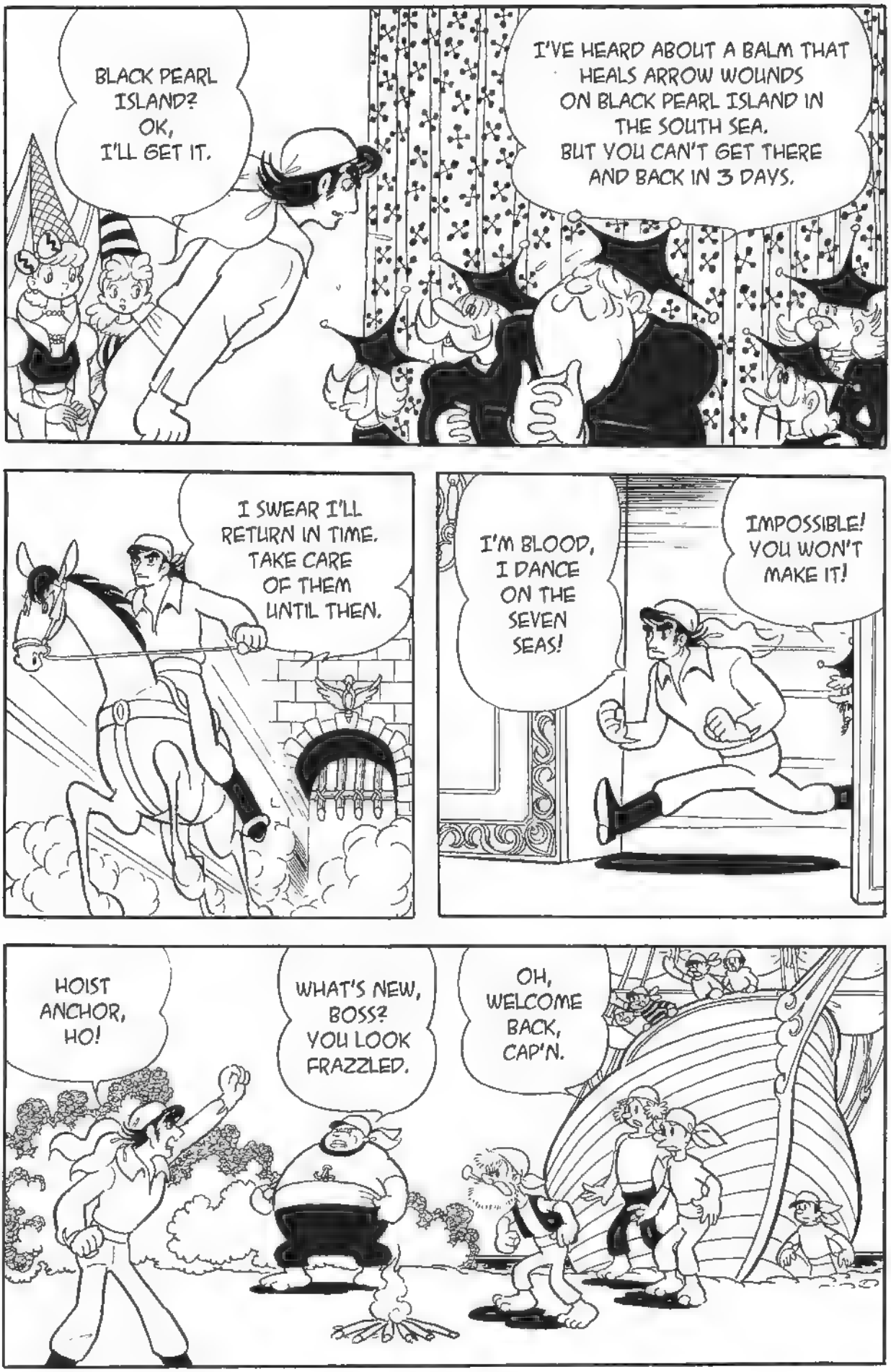
I'M SO GLAD YOU RSVP-ED SO SOON !
I WANT TO BE THERE WHEN HE WEDS. I ACCEPT YOUR OFFER. PLEASE COMMEND ME TO MISS HECATE.
I ADORED PRINCE FRANZ. SO...
DON'T FORGET! FRIDAY THE 13TH!
OH, RIGHT, KING SATAN SAID HE WAS VERY INTERESTED IN MEETING YOU. HO HO HO
THE CREATURES OF MOUNT RESIN WILL THROW A HUGE BANQUET. GREAT KING SATAN WILL BE THERE, TOO.

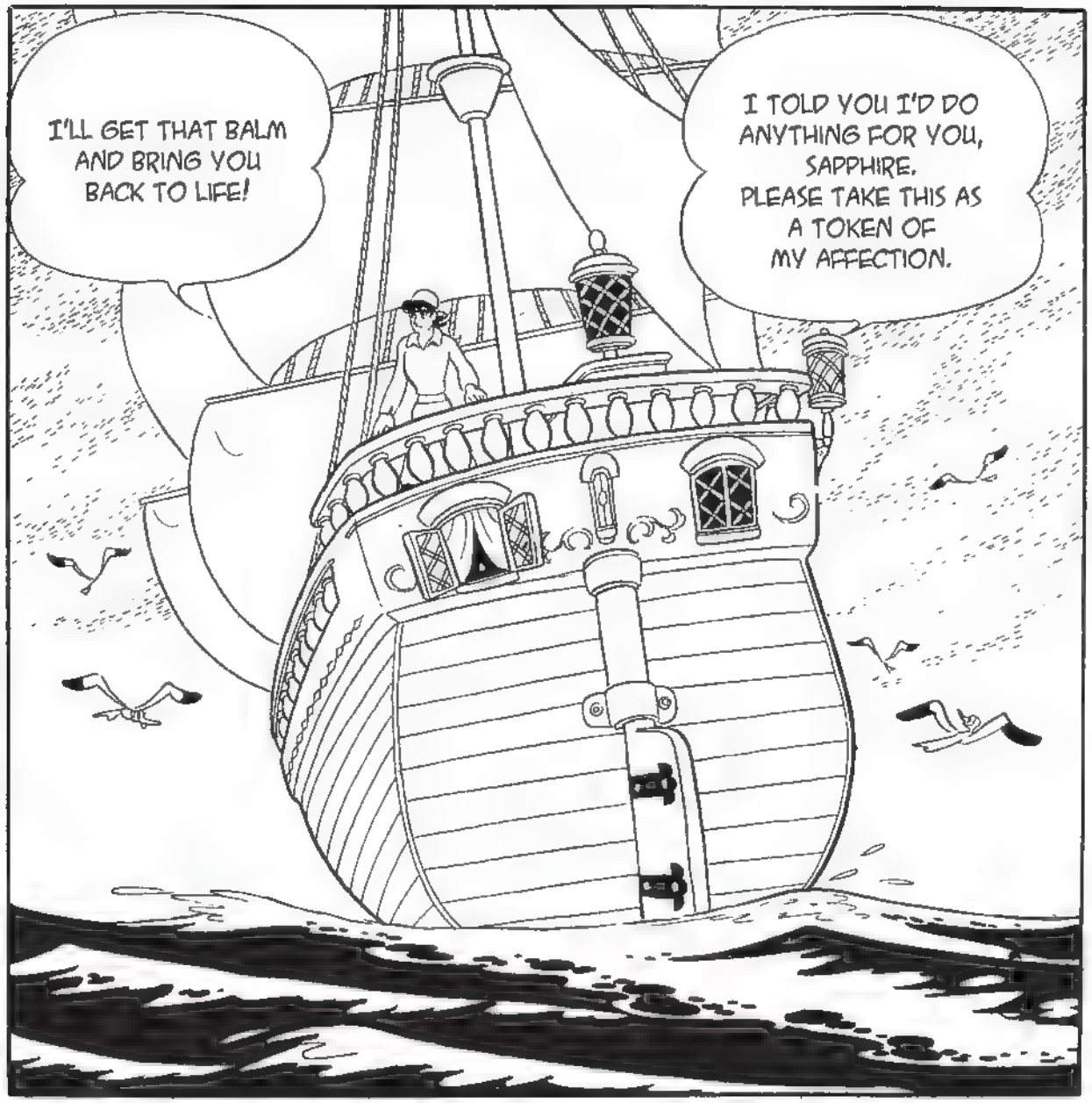
I WANT TO SEE HIM ONE LAST TIME.
I AM.
ARE YOU SURE?
WHEW!
NOW.
SHE'S NEAR THE WINDOW.
SHE HISSED SOMETHING ABOUT SATAN WANTING TO SEE YOU. THEY'RE PLOTTING SOMETHING TREACHEROUS.
NO, YOU MUSTN'T GO! IT'S A TRAP!
AN ARROW RIGHT THROUGH HER HEART!

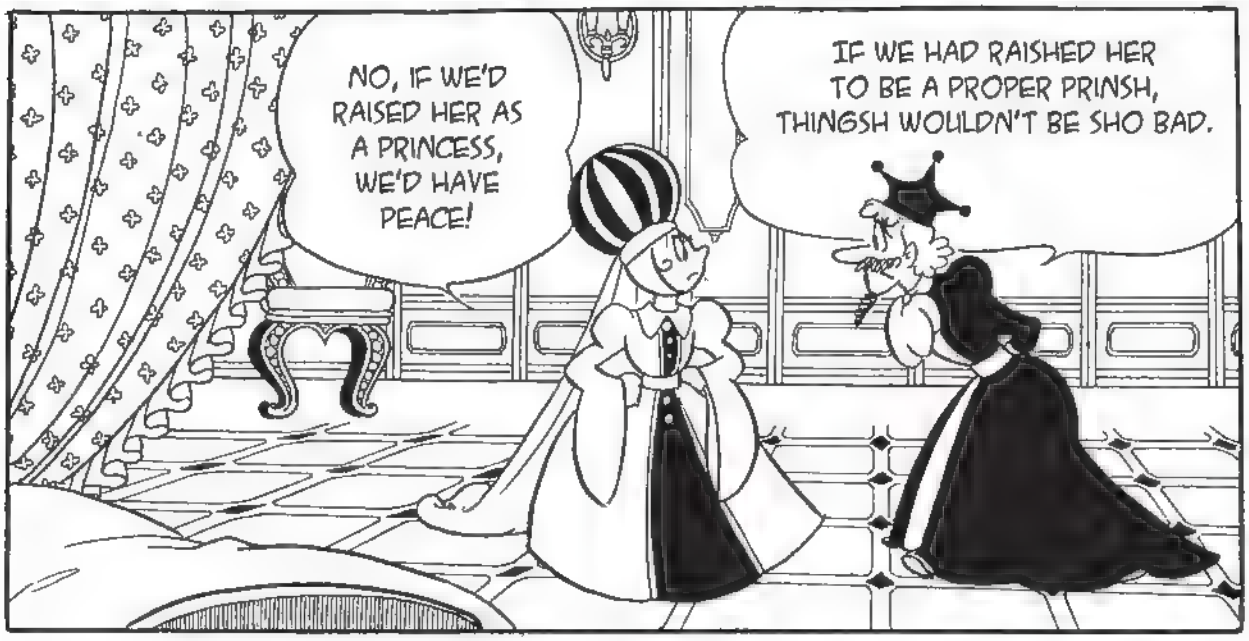

BAM
MAY I ENTER?
KNOK
KNOK
YOU ALONE ARE THE TRUE RULER OF SILVERLAND.
I'VE RUN OUT OF PATIENCE FOR MY FATHER. I'M RETURNING THE CROWN, THE SYMBOL OF KINGSHIP, TO YOU.
UNH!
SHOOP
PLEASE TAKE IT.


UNH!
OH NO !!
P-PLASTIC GOT IN THE WAY!
SHOOP
BASTARD!
SHEEP
URGH !

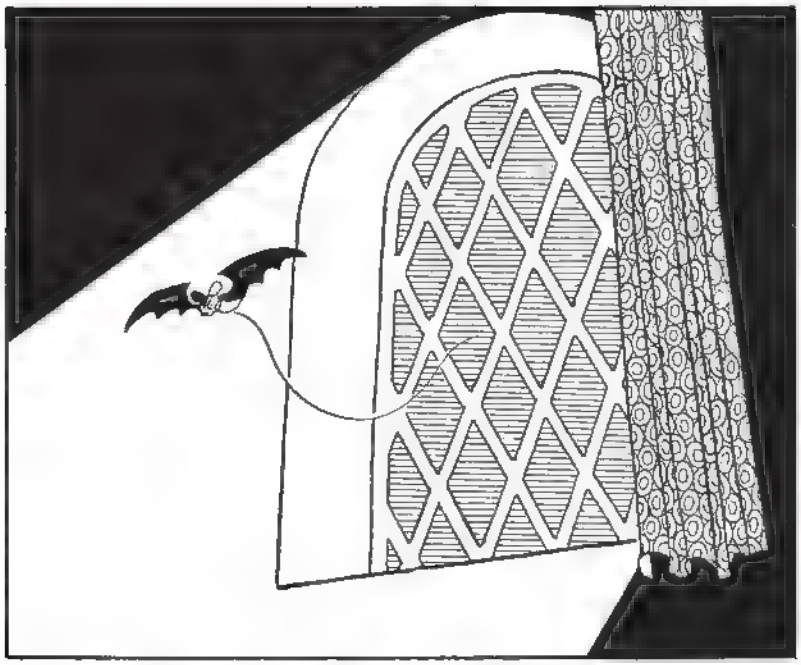
GOTTA GET GONE.
I CAN'T STAY HERE AFTER SHOOTING PLASTIC.
DAMMIT! WHAT'VE I DONE?
I DON'T EVEN CARE ANYMORE.
WHERE IS THE DOCTOR?!
THE WOUND'S NOT DEEP!
SAPPHIRE!!
HMM...
BUT I DON'T KNOW IF THEY'LL LAST EVEN 3 DAYS IN THIS CONDITION.
LUCKILY, BOTH ARROWS MISSED THEIR HEARTS.


BLACK PEARL ISLAND? OK, I'LL GET IT.
I'VE HEARD ABOUT A BALM THAT HEALS ARROW WOUNDS ON BLACK PEARL ISLAND IN THE SOUTH SEA. BUT YOU CAN'T GET THERE AND BACK IN 3 DAYS.
I SWEAR I'LL RETURN IN TIME. TAKE CARE OF THEM UNTIL THEN.
I'M BLOOD, I DANCE ON THE SEVEN SEAS!
IMPOSSIBLE! YOU WON'T MAKE IT!
HOIST ANCHOR, HO!
WHAT'S NEW, BOSS? YOU LOOK FRAZZLED.
OH, WELCOME BACK, CAP'N.


I'LL GET THAT BALM AND BRING YOU BACK TO LIFE!
I TOLD YOU I'D DO ANYTHING FOR YOU, SAPPHIRE. PLEASE TAKE THIS AS A TOKEN OF MY AFFECTION.

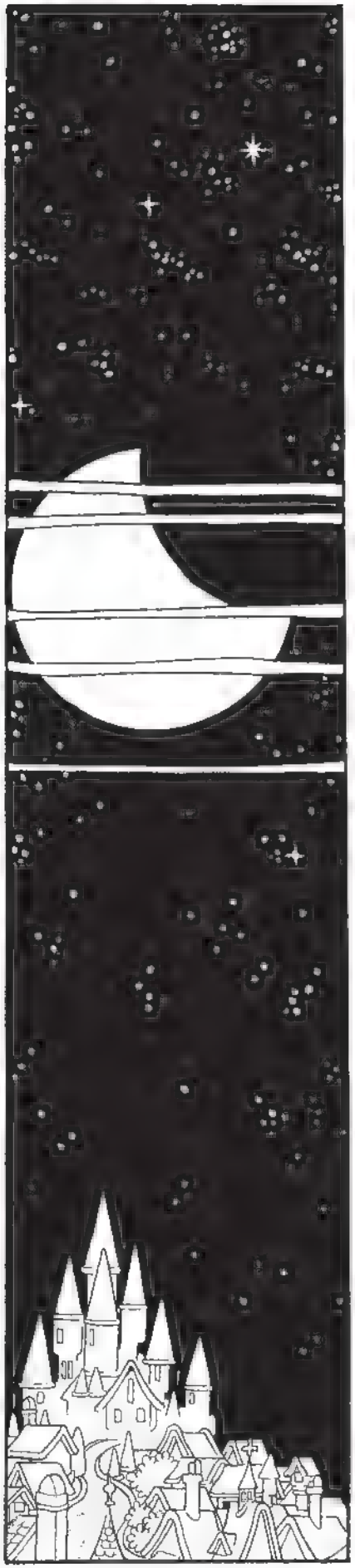

NO, IF WE'D RAISED HER AS A PRINCESS, WE'D HAVE PEACE!
IF WE HAD RAISHED HER TO BE A PROPER PRINSH, THINGSH WOULDN'T BE SHO BAD.

HOW DARE YOU, YOU UNRIPE PEPPER!
HOW DARE YOU, YOU ROTTEN SHQUASH!
NO, A PRINCESS!
NO, A PRINSH!
SHUT UP!
PRINCESS!
PRINSH!
FRANZ...
PLEASE LET US KNOW IF HER CONDITION CHANGES.
3 DAYSH! WE'LL TEND TO HIM IN SHIFTS, FOR 3 DAYSH!
SHE'S DELIRIOUSH, AND HER BREATH IS SHALLOW.
SHE CALLED OUT FOR FRANZ.

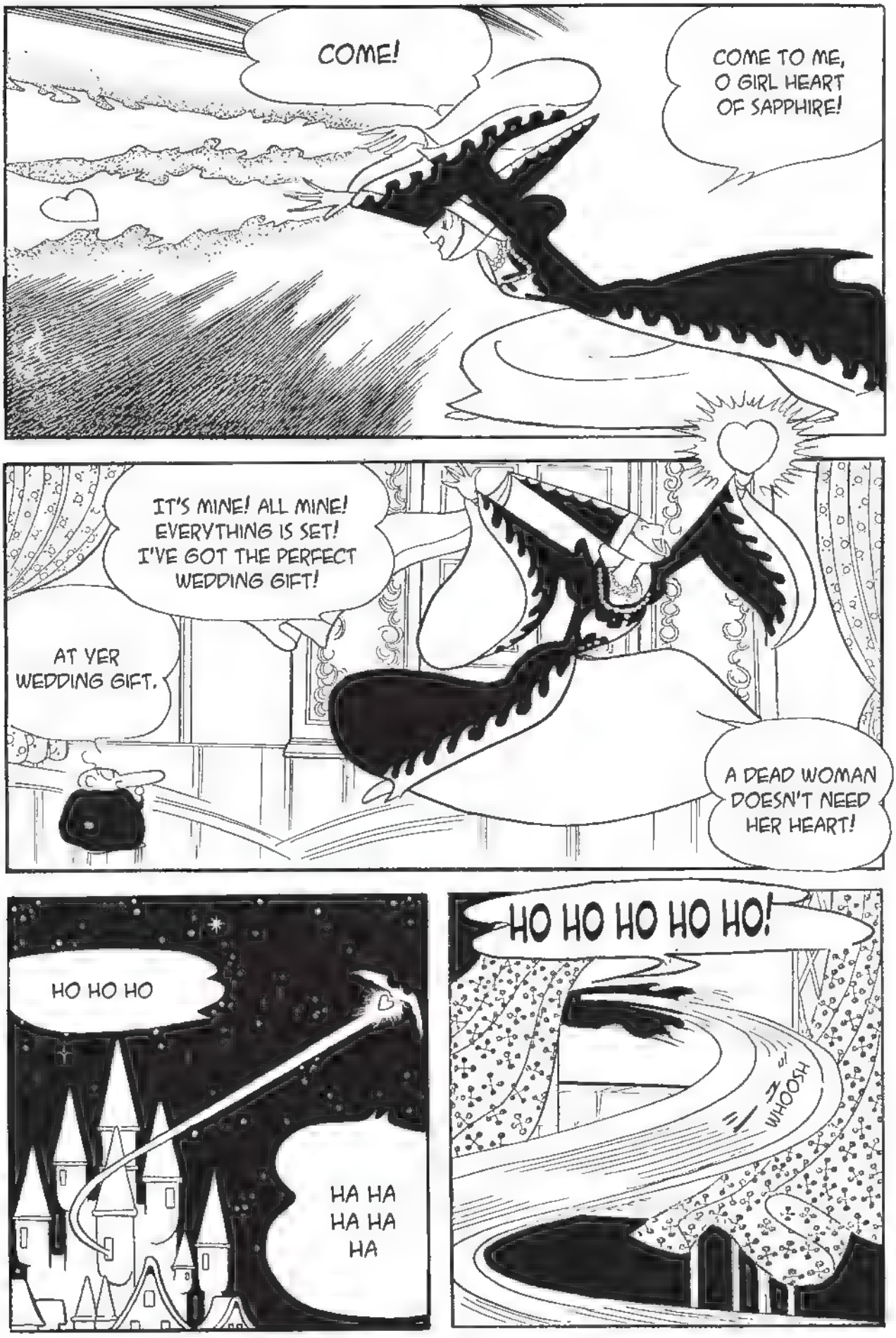


SO THE RUMORS WERE TRUE.

SAPPHIRE'S WOUNDED, ON THE VERGE OF DEATH!
NO!!



SHE'LL NEVER MAKE IT TO TOMORROW'S WEDDING IN THAT STATE!
NOW'S MY CHANCE TO STEAL HER GIRL HEART!
SHE'LL BE DEAD SOON...


COME!
COME TO ME, O GIRL HEART OF SAPPHIRE!
IT'S MINE! ALL MINE! EVERYTHING IS SET! I'VE GOT THE PERFECT WEDDING GIFT!
AT YER WEDDING GIFT.
A DEAD WOMAN DOESN'T NEED HER HEART!
HO HO HO
HA HA HA HA HA
HO HO HO HO HO!
WHOOSH

Chapter 22

The Devil's Wedding

FRIDAY THE 13TH, THE DAY OF THE WEDDING BETWEEN PRINCE FRANZ AND HECATE, THE DEVIL'S DAUGHTER. ALL THE GOBLINS AND MONSTERS THROUGHOUT GOLDLAND GATHERED IN JUBILEE IN THE CASTLE FILLED WITH SUBJECTS' STONY STATUES.

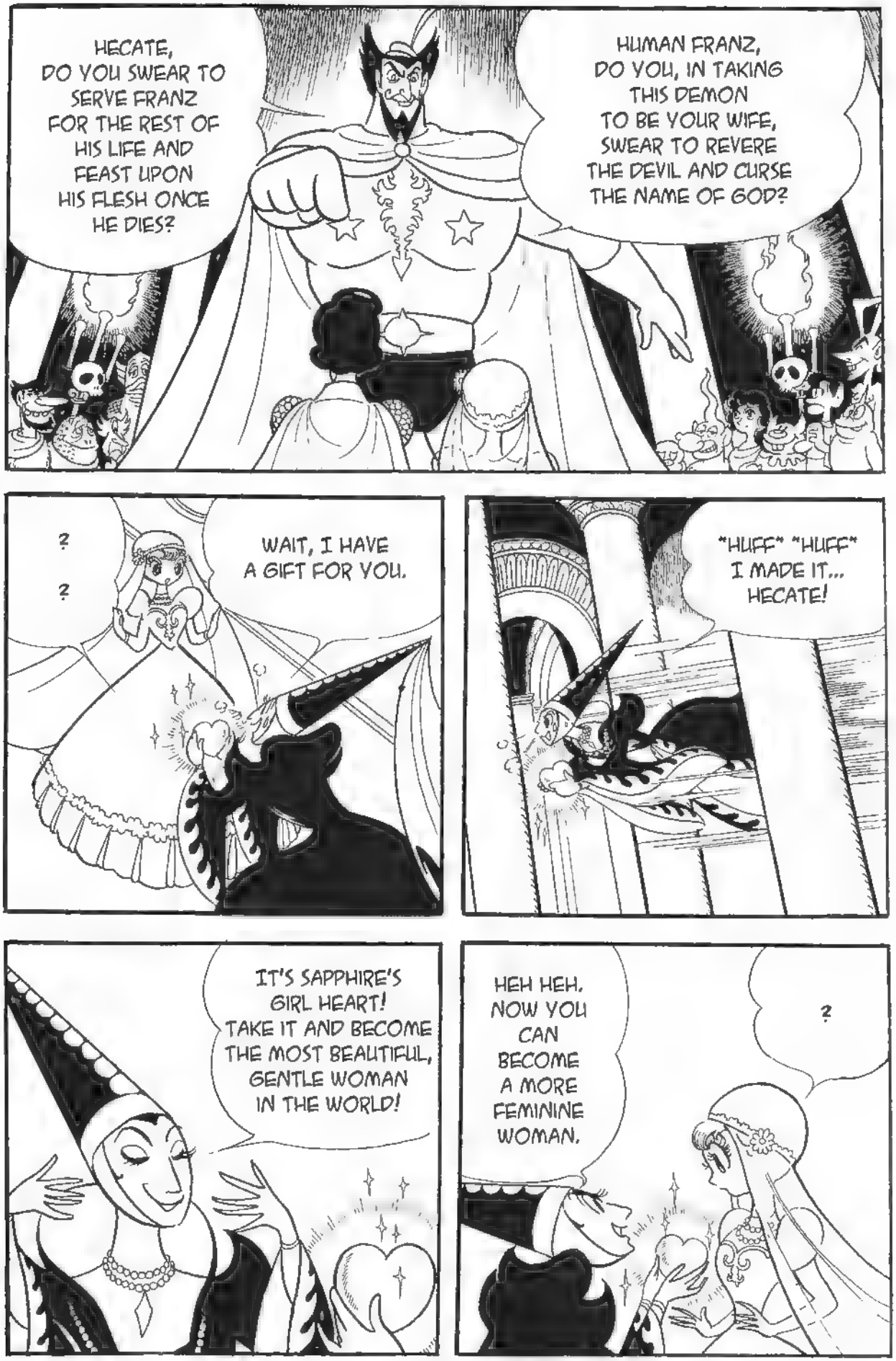
REALLY? I'M HERE FROM A PILE OF SEWAGE!
I CAME FROM THE BOTTOM OF AN OLD WELL. I HOPE THIS IS OVER SOON—I'M SO COLD!
SHH! THE BRIDE'S HERE!

EVERYTHING'S READY. BEGIN THE CEREMONY!

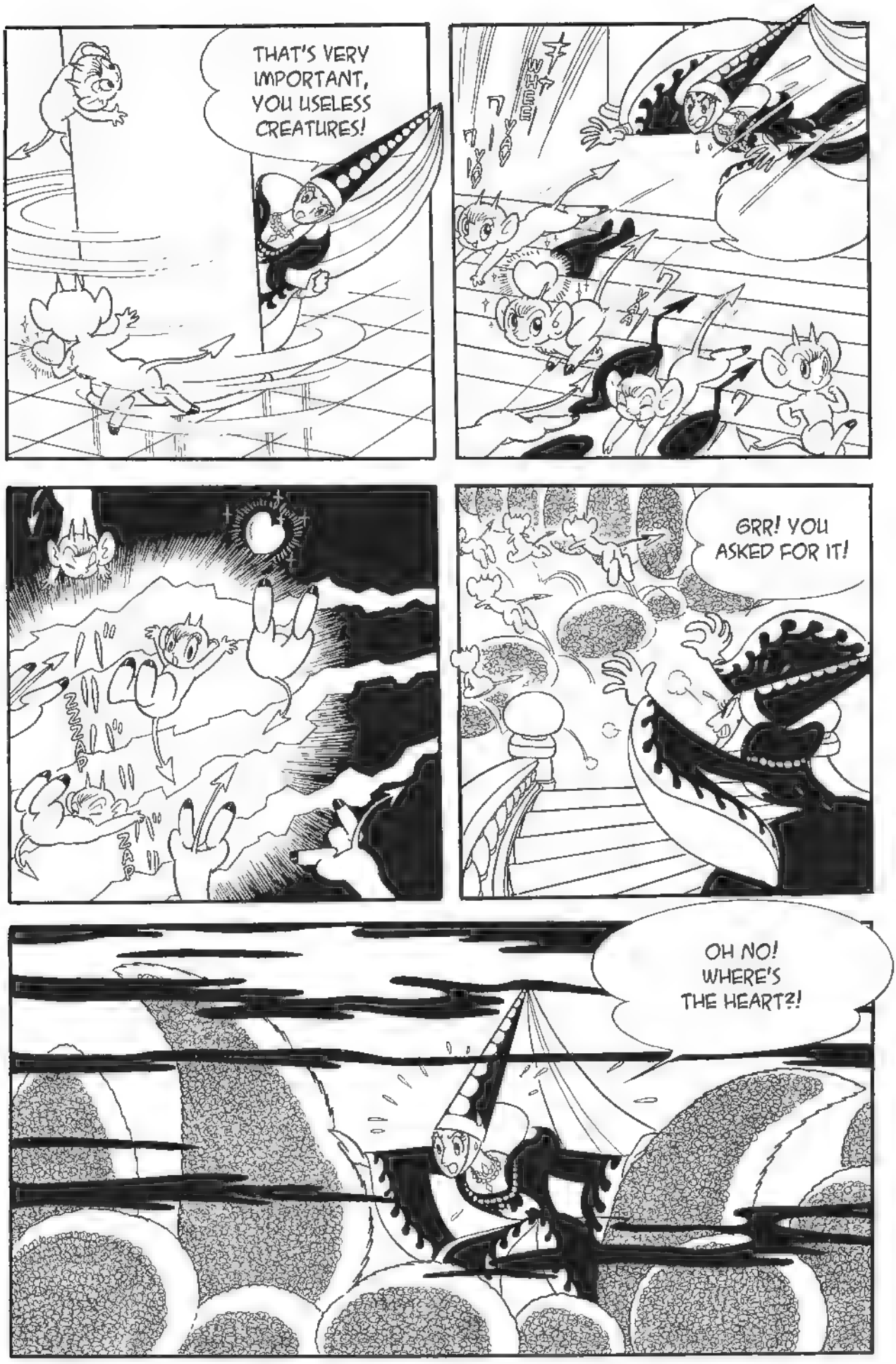
I HATE IT. WHY DOES SHE HAVE TO DRESS UP LIKE A HUMAN BRIDE ANWYAY?
HUMANS THINK IT'S PRETTY?
OH, HOW UTTERLY HIDEOUS!
WELL, SHE IS A GIRL.

WHAT A DRAB GROOM!
HE'S HUMAN!

NEXT, THE GROOM!

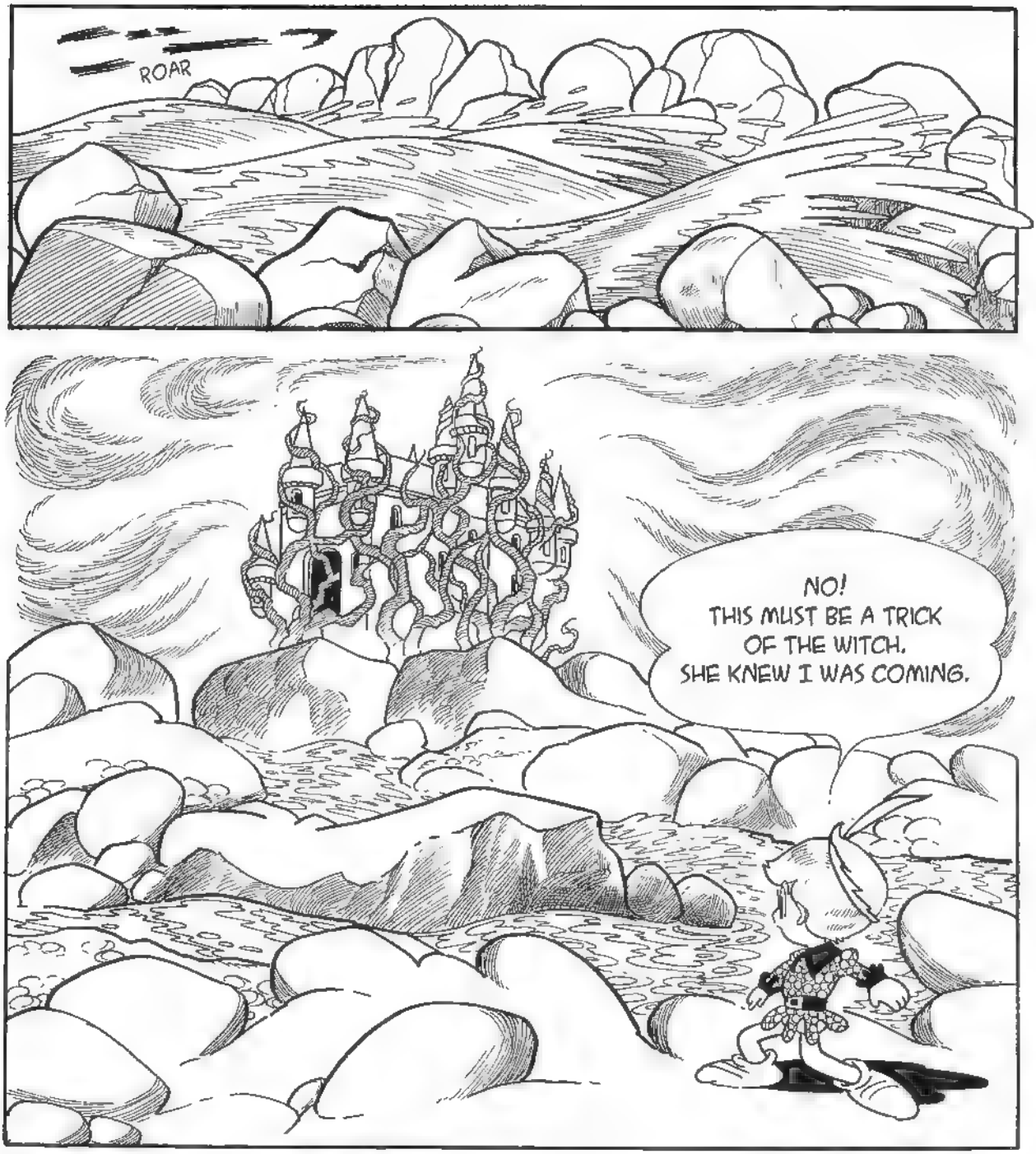

HECATE, DO YOU SWEAR TO SERVE FRANZ FOR THE REST OF HIS LIFE AND FEAST UPON HIS FLESH ONCE HE DIES?
HUMAN FRANZ, DO YOU, IN TAKING THIS DEMON TO BE YOUR WIFE, SWEAR TO REVERE THE DEVIL AND CURSE THE NAME OF GOD?
?
?
WAIT, I HAVE A GIFT FOR YOU.
"HUFF" "HUFF" I MADE IT... HECATE!
IT'S SAPPHIRE'S GIRL HEART! TAKE IT AND BECOME THE MOST BEAUTIFUL, GENTLE WOMAN IN THE WORLD!
HEH HEH. NOW YOU CAN BECOME A MORE FEMININE WOMAN.
?

I DON'T WANT IT STOLEN AGAIN, SO HURRY UP AND SWALLOW IT.
...
YES! I JUST TOOK IT FROM HER.
SAPPHIRE'S HEART?
YAY YAAAY!
AH!
HURRY!
HALT, YOU LITTLE BRATS! GIVE THAT BACK!

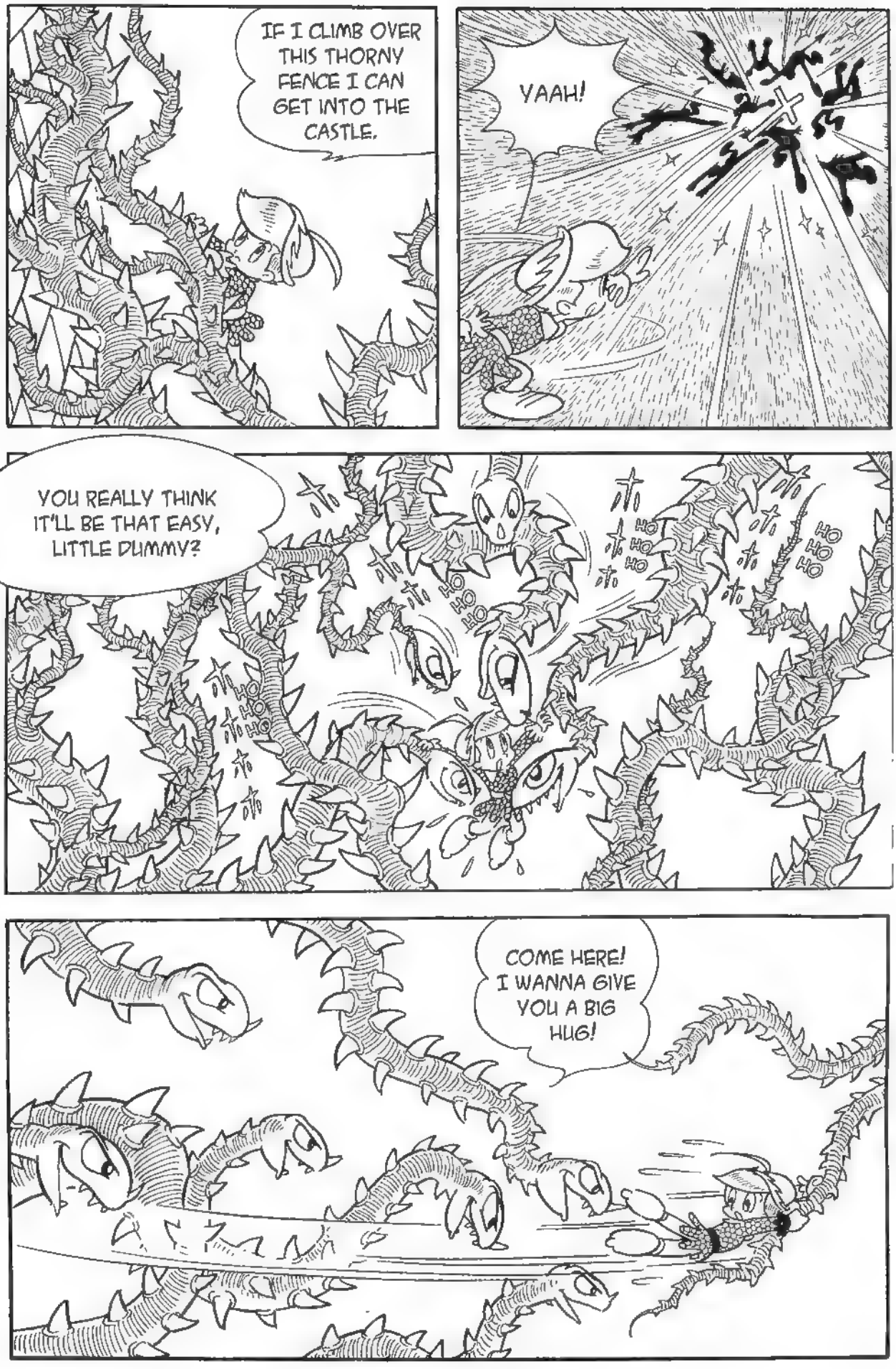

THAT'S VERY IMPORTANT, YOU USELESS CREATURES!
WHEE
ZZZZAP
ZAP
GRR! YOU ASKED FOR IT!
OH NO! WHERE'S THE HEART?!

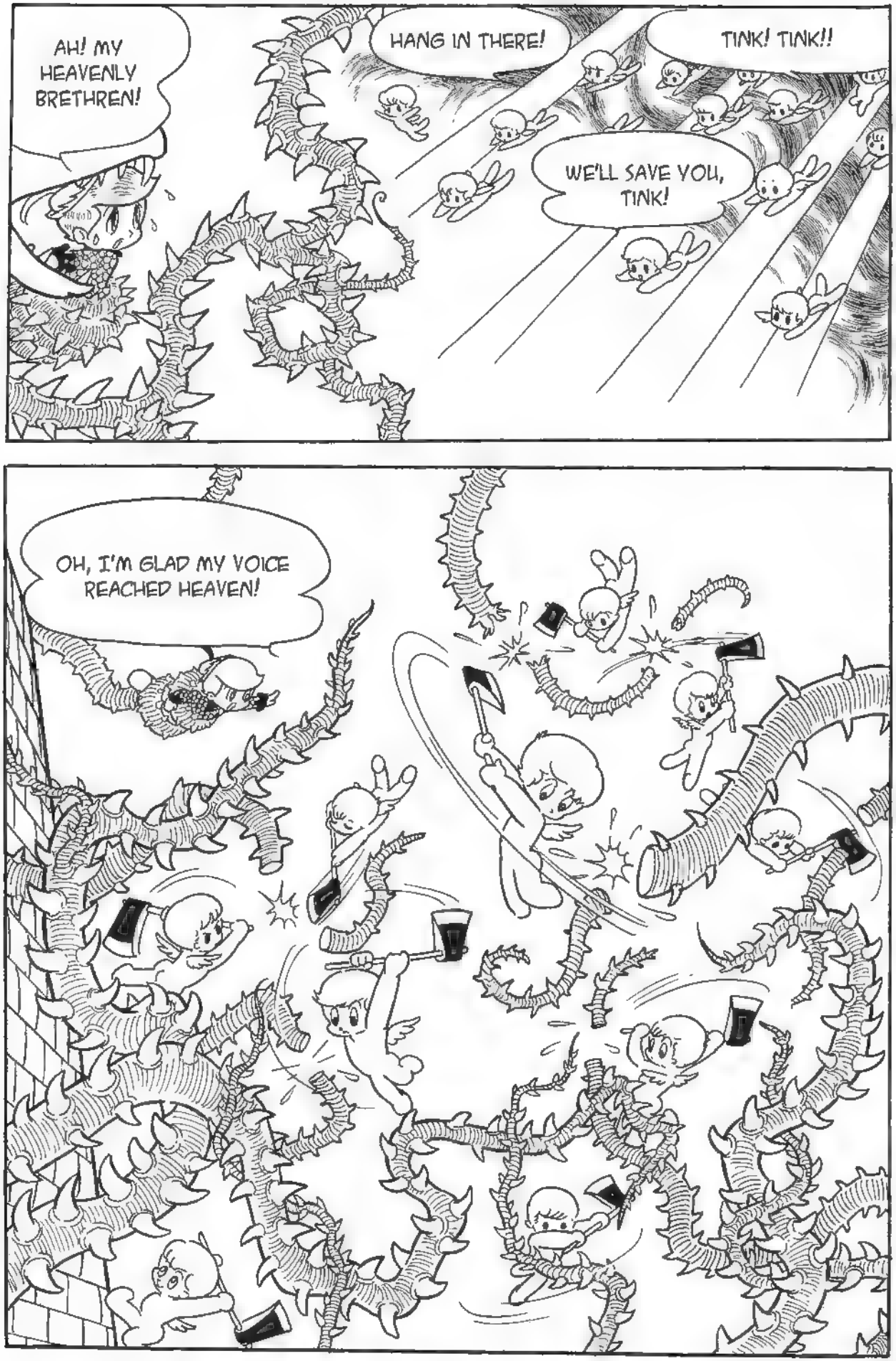
THAT IMPUDENT LITTLE CHERUB IS COMING HERE, EH?
AN ANGEL?
AND WHAT SHOULD WE DO TO HIM?
WHAT NOW?
O BRIARS THORNED! SURROUND THIS PALACE, MAY ALL INTRUDERS BE SCORNED!

I'LL SHOW HIM WHAT HAPPENS TO UNINVITED GUESTS!
EVEN AN ANGEL WON'T BE ABLE TO ENTER THIS DEMONIC GATHERING. NOT LIKE HE HAD AN INVITATION, ANYWAY!
THAT'S PRINCE FRANZ'S CASTLE. THE WITCH MUST BE THERE.
WHUMP
OH! THE EARTH'S SPLITTING OPEN!

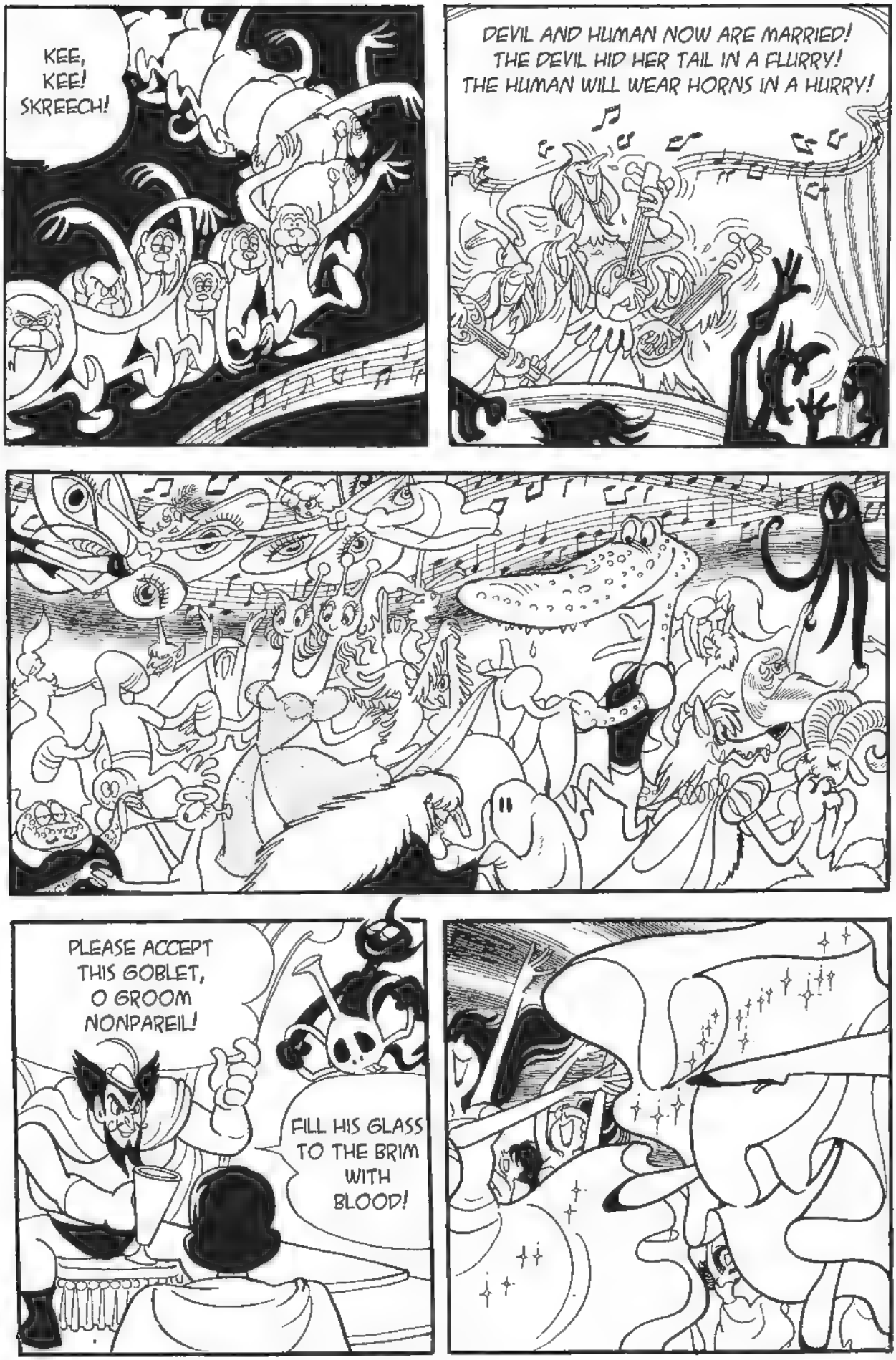

ROAR
NO!
THIS MUST BE A TRICK
OF THE WITCH.
SHE KNEW I WAS COMING.
LET'S HAVE A BANQUET!
WANT SOME WINE?
IT'S MADE FROM THE
BLOOD OF SOWS AND
GOATS!
WELCOME,
CHERUB!
HISS!

HELLO LITTLE ANGEL,
HOW ARE YOU FEELIN'?
WE'RE HAVING A DEMON'S
PARTY THIS EVENIN'!
WITH BLOOD WINE AND POISON LIQUEUR,
AND A FROG'S EYES MEUNIERE.
EAT UP, EAT UP
'TIL YOU DIE!
I'M HERE TO
SEE THE WITCH!
I DON'T CARE ABOUT
ANY PARTY!
UGH!
ARGH!
YAH! MAKE WAY!
KEEP MESSING WITH ME AND
I'LL SHOW YOU MY TRUE POWER!


IF I CLIMB OVER THIS THORNY FENCE I CAN GET INTO THE CASTLE.
YAAH!
YOU REALLY THINK IT'LL BE THAT EASY, LITTLE DUMMY?
HO HO HO
COME HERE! I WANNA GIVE YOU A BIG HUG!

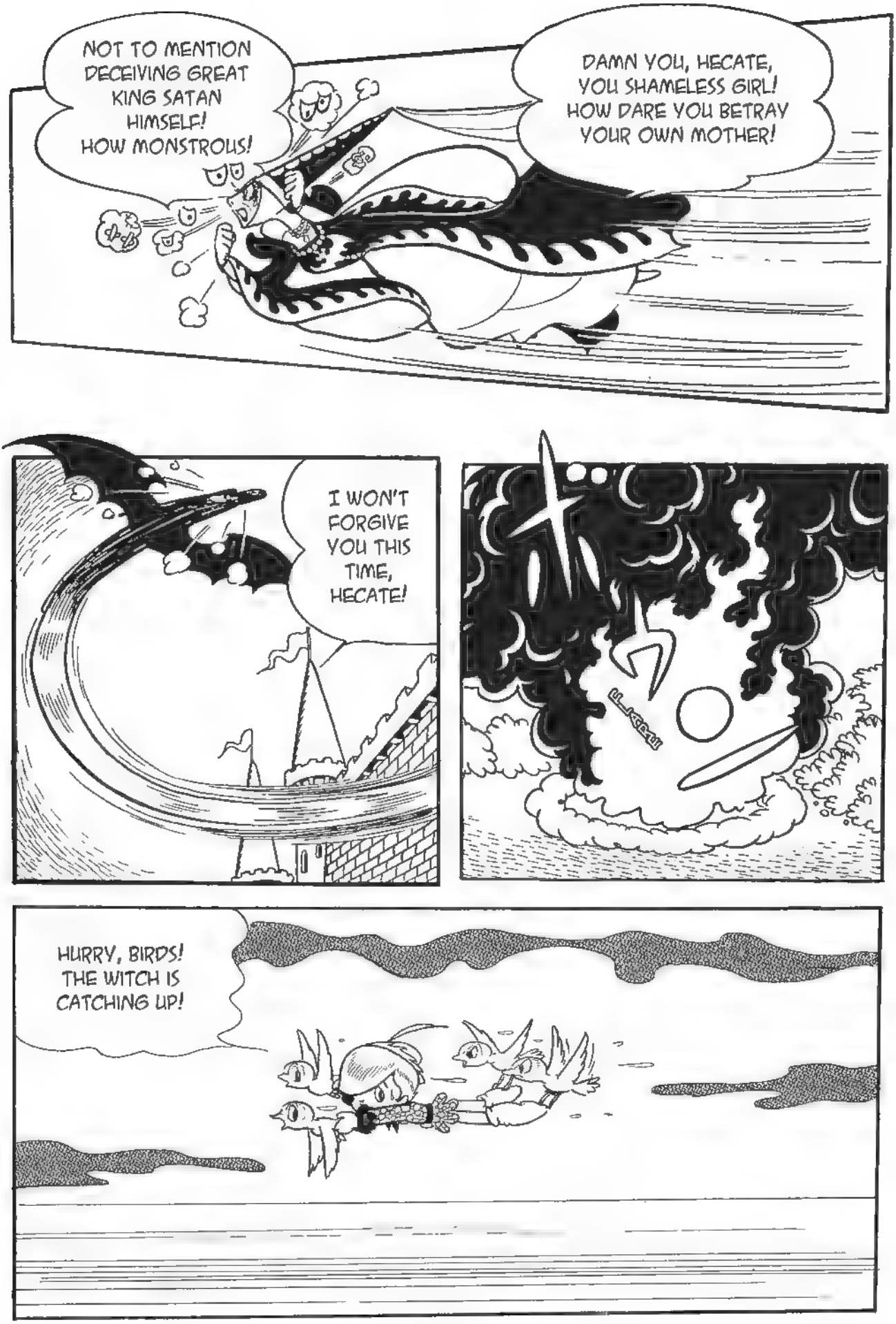

AH! MY HEAVENLY BRETHREN!
HANG IN THERE!
TINK! TINK!!
WE'LL SAVE YOU, TINK!
OH, I'M GLAD MY VOICE REACHED HEAVEN!

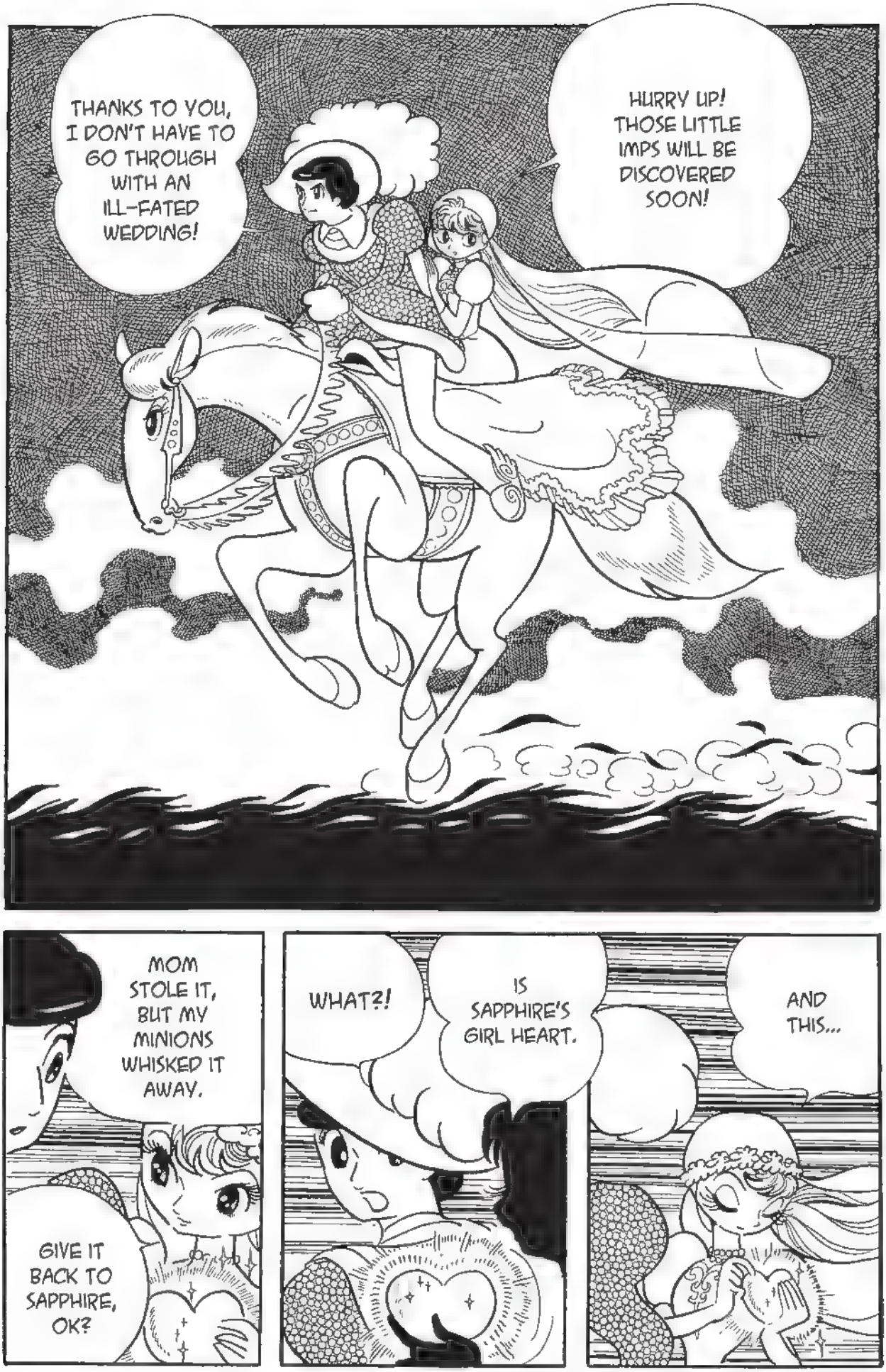
HOOF-PRINTS? SOMEONE LEFT IN A HURRY.
CHAAARGE!
I MADE IT TO THE RAMPART!
THEY ARE NOW JOINED IN UNHOLY MATRIMONY! LET'S DANCE FOR 3 DAYS AND NIGHTS!


KEE, KEE! SKREECH!
DEVIL AND HUMAN NOW ARE MARRIED!
THE DEVIL HID HER TAIL IN A FLURRY!
THE HUMAN WILL WEAR HORNS IN A HURRY!
PLEASE ACCEPT THIS GOBLET, O GROOM NONPAREIL!
FILL HIS GLASS TO THE BRIM WITH BLOOD!

Y-YOU...
AH!
I WAS TOTALLY FOOLED!
AND THE BRIDE? OH!
A THOUSAND DEMONS WERE DECEIVED! WELL DONE! BRAVO! HA HA HA!
THE BRIDE AND GROOM WERE FAKES!
MWA HA HA HA HA HA HA! WHAT A SHOW!

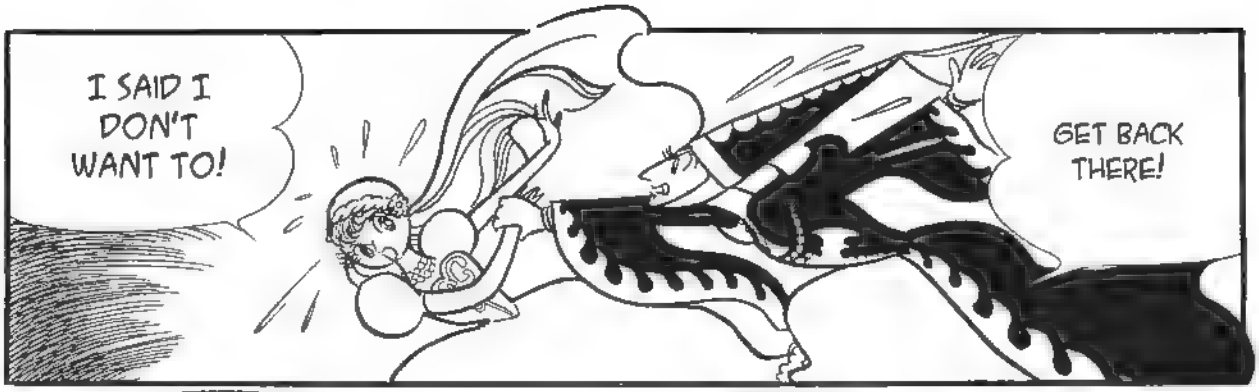
MADAME HELL! WHERE ARE YOU?
MY...REAL DAUGHTER? AT THE CEREMONY...
WHERE'S YOUR REAL DAUGHTER?
THOSE WERE IMPS DISGUISED AS THE COUPLE? WHAT A HORRIBLE FRAUD!
OH... YOU DON'T MEAN... IT CAN'T BE...
WHY NOT GO AND SEE FOR YOURSELF WHETHER IT'S A FAKE OR NOT.
WHAT? FAKE?
FRANZ PROBABLY FLED ON HORSEBACK.
SO THEY HAD THE IMPS TAKE THEIR PLACE.
THIS IS HECATE'S DOING!
Y-Y-YESSIR!
FIND THE REAL ONES AND BRING 'EM HERE!


NOT TO MENTION DECEIVING GREAT KING SATAN HIMSELF! HOW MONSTROUS!
DAMN YOU, HECATE, YOU SHAMELESS GIRL! HOW DARE YOU BETRAY YOUR OWN MOTHER!
I WON'T FORGIVE YOU THIS TIME, HECATE!
HURRY, BIRDS! THE WITCH IS CATCHING UP!


THANKS TO YOU, I DON'T HAVE TO GO THROUGH WITH AN ILL-FATED WEDDING!
HURRY UP! THOSE LITTLE IMPS WILL BE DISCOVERED SOON!
MOM STOLE IT, BUT MY MINIONS WHISKED IT AWAY.
GIVE IT BACK TO SAPPHIRE, OK?
WHAT?!
IS SAPPHIRE'S GIRL HEART.
AND THIS...

I GUESS I'M JUST NOT CUT OUT FOR A DEMON'S LIFE.
YEAH, THAT'S WHY MOM HATES ME.
YOU'RE A REALLY FANTASTIC AND KIND GIRL, FOR A DEMON!
THAT'S A WONDERFUL PRESENT!
OH! HERE SHE COMES!
I'LL HIDE YOU. SHE'LL KILL YOU FOR CERTAIN THIS TIME IF SHE FINDS YOU!

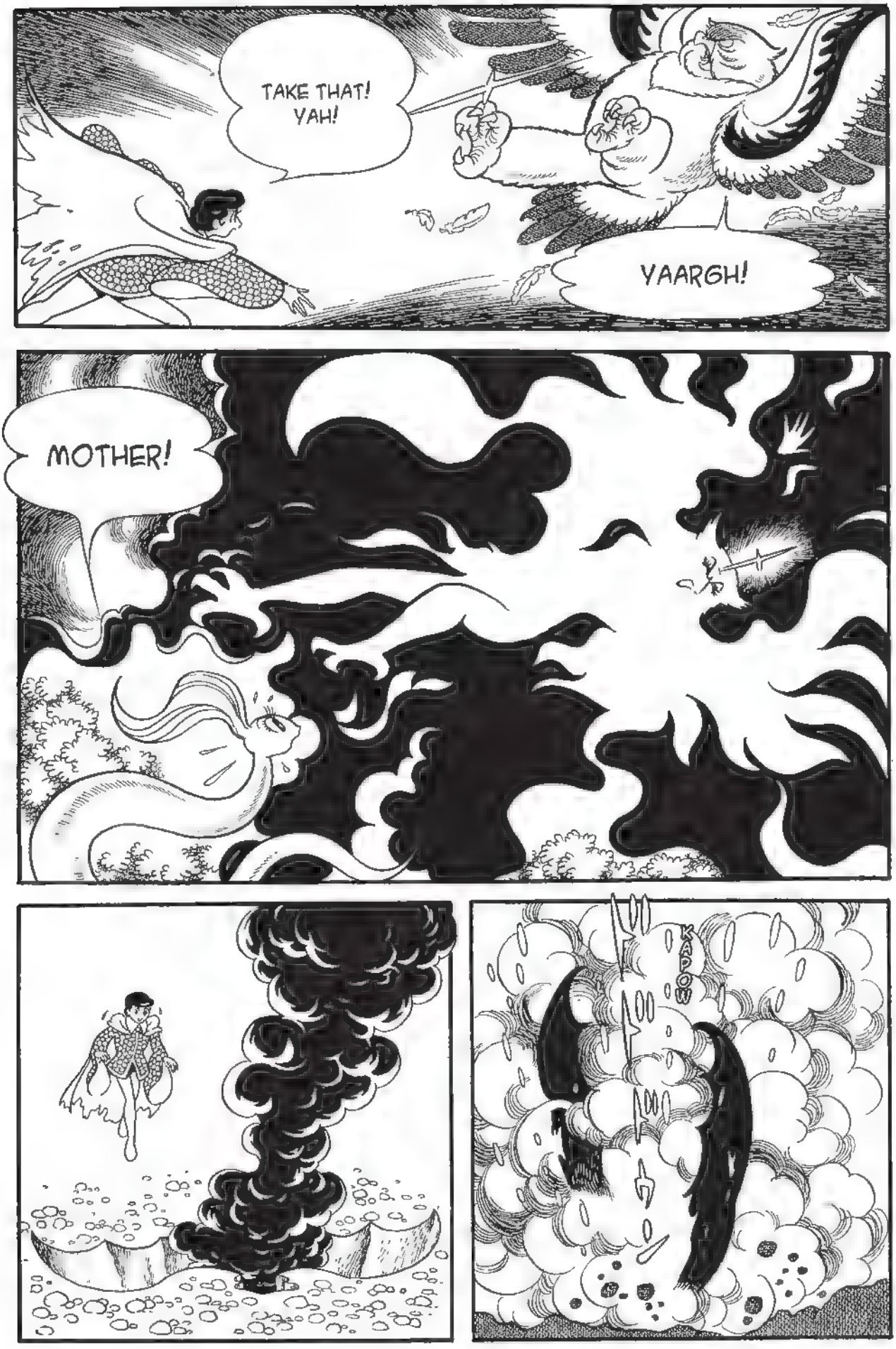
BANG
AGH!
WHOOSH
NO!
HECATE, GET OUT OF MY WAY!
SILENCE, YOU INGRATE! GET BACK TO THE PALACE AND BE WED, NOW!
IT'S ALL YOUR FAULT FOR FORCING ME TO MARRY A PRINCE AGAINST MY WILL!
HECATE, HOW DARE YOU SHAME ME SO. NOW I CAN NEVER SHOW MY FACE IN HELLISH HIGH SOCIETY AGAIN!


I SAID I DON'T WANT TO!
GET BACK THERE!

RUN, FRANZ! DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME!

AAAGH!
HECATE'S IN TROUBLE!

PTOO
KLANG
HUP!
I'M DONE FOR.
WHOA!
MMPH
ARGH!
MY DAGGER ... IS A CRUCIFIX!
AH!


TAKE THAT! YAH!
YAARGH!
MOTHER!
KABOW

AH!
THE WITCH'S DEAD...
I SNUCK INTO THE CASTLE, THEN FOLLOWED THE HOOFPRINTS.
THANKS! HOW DID YOU KNOW I'D RUN HERE?
TINK... ARE YOU THE ONE THAT TURNED MY BLADE INTO A CROSS?
NO, I JUST PRAYED TO THE HEAVENLY FATHER.
FRANZ, MY TIME HAS COME... TIME TO SAY GOOD-BYE.
I'M SORRY, HECATE. SHE WAS YOUR ONLY MOTHER.

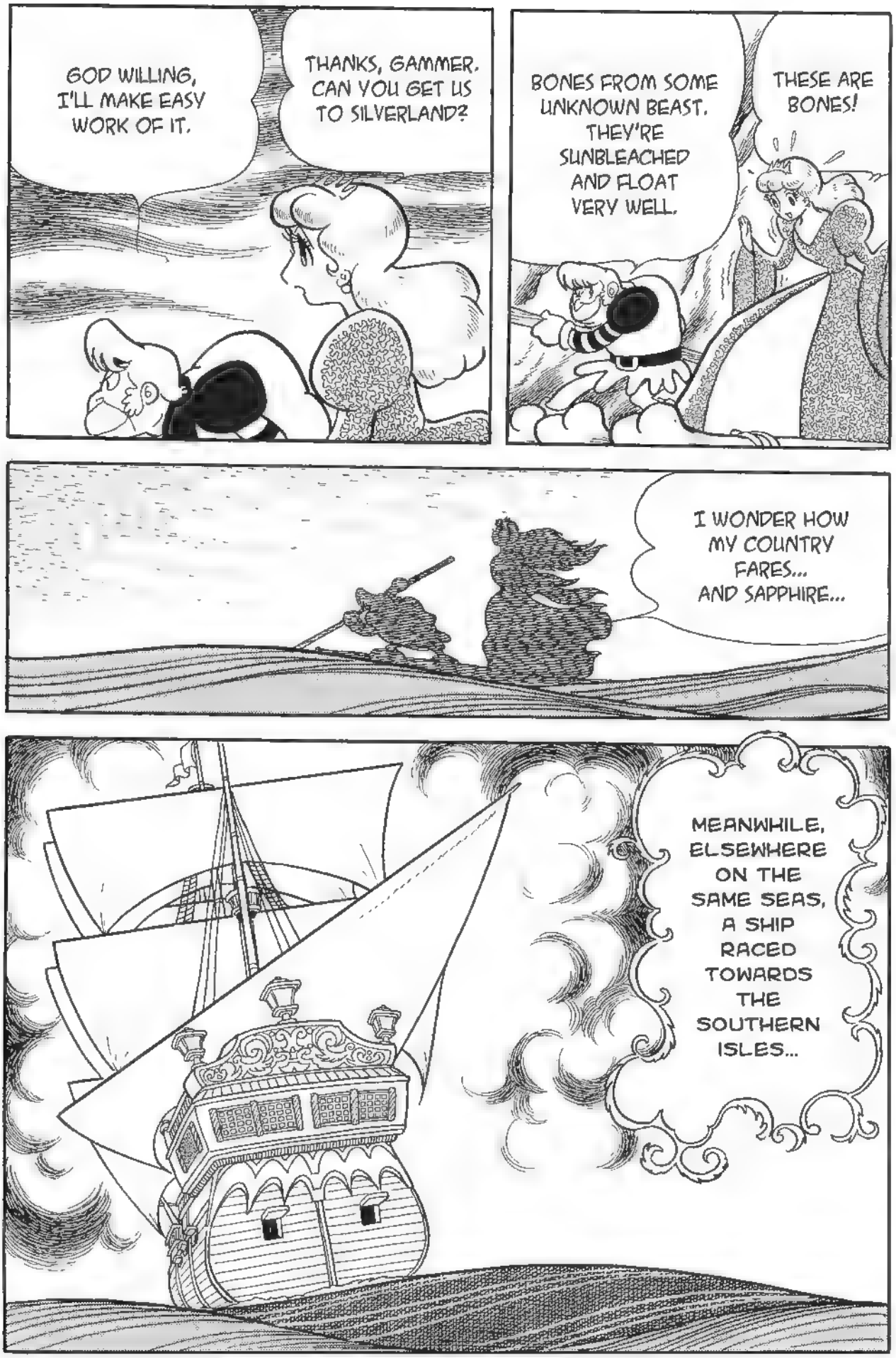
I WAS BORN FROM MOM'S MAGIC. I'M VERY FRAGILE.
WHY? WHY MUST THAT BE SO?
HEH. IF MY MOTHER DIES, I DIE, TOO.
NO! JUST HANG ON!
PLEASE LEAVE. I DON'T KNOW WHAT HIDEOUS FORM I'LL ASSUME WHEN I DIE.
HECATE ...
BUT I DON'T BLAME YOU FOR KILLING HER. IF YOU DIDN'T, SHE WOULD'VE KILLED YOU.
FAREWELL... FRANZ...
GOOD-BYE... HECATE.
PLEASE DON'T LOOK... JUST GO...

WHERE AM I?
OH? WHAT NOW?
WHAT WAS I DOING?
GAAAH!
EEK!
WE GOTTA SCRAM!
THE SPELL IS BROKEN! THEY'RE BACK TO BEING HUMAN!
RUN AWAY!

HUNH? DID I FALL ASLEEP ON THIS CHAIR?
UH, WELL...
WHO HELD A BANQUET HERE?
OW OW OW! IT'S LIKE MY HIPS TURNED TO STONE!
IS ANYONE THERE?
D-DEMONS?!
SO I GUESS SOME DEMONS DECIDED TO THROW A PARTY HERE.
WE SAW A MESS OF GOBLINS ESCAPE THROUGH THE WINDOWS,

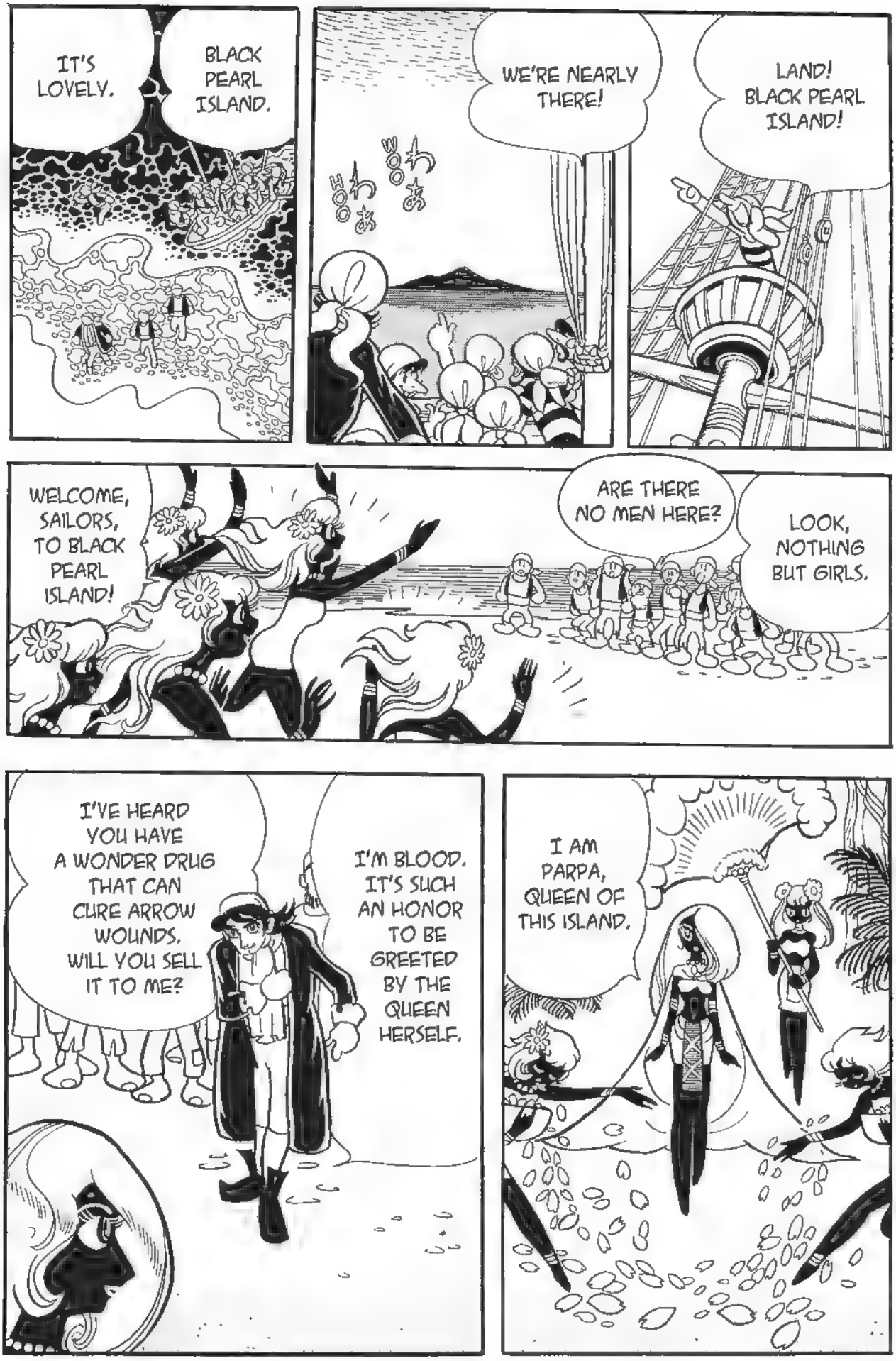
BWOM
OH!
IT'S A MIRACLE! A BLESSING FROM HEAVEN!
GAMMER !
I FEEL LIKE I'VE BEEN STANDING HERE FOR AGES.

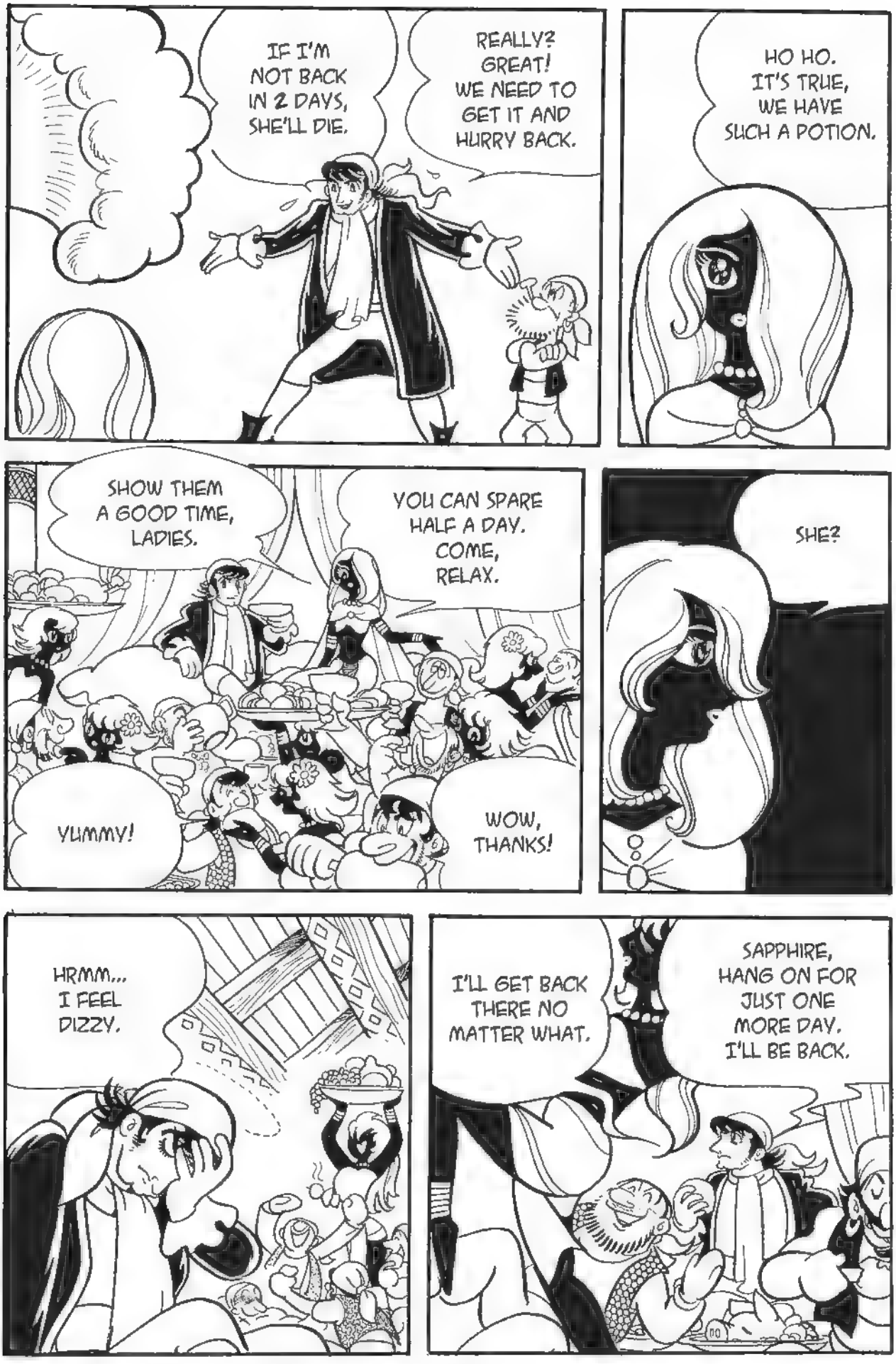
I WAS ...?
YOU AND I WERE TURNED INTO STONE BY HER MAGIC!
THE WITCH'S SPELL HAS BEEN BROKEN!
I'M BEGINNING TO REMEMBER...
I DIDN'T EVEN REALIZE!
AH! NOW THAT I'M FREED I WANT TO GO HOME RIGHT AWAY!
THAT'S RIGHT. SAPPHIRE CAME HERE TO RESCUE US FROM EXILE BUT I WAS STRUCK BY LIGHTNING.
READY, MY QUEEN? WE'RE SET TO GO.


GOD WILLING, I'LL MAKE EASY WORK OF IT.
THANKS, GAMMER. CAN YOU GET US TO SILVERLAND?
BONES FROM SOME UNKNOWN BEAST. THEY'RE SUNBLEACHED AND FLOAT VERY WELL.
THESE ARE BONES!
I WONDER HOW MY COUNTRY FARES... AND SAPPHIRE...
MEANWHILE, ELSEWHERE ON THE SAME SEAS, A SHIP RACED TOWARDS THE SOUTHERN ISLES...

Chapter 23

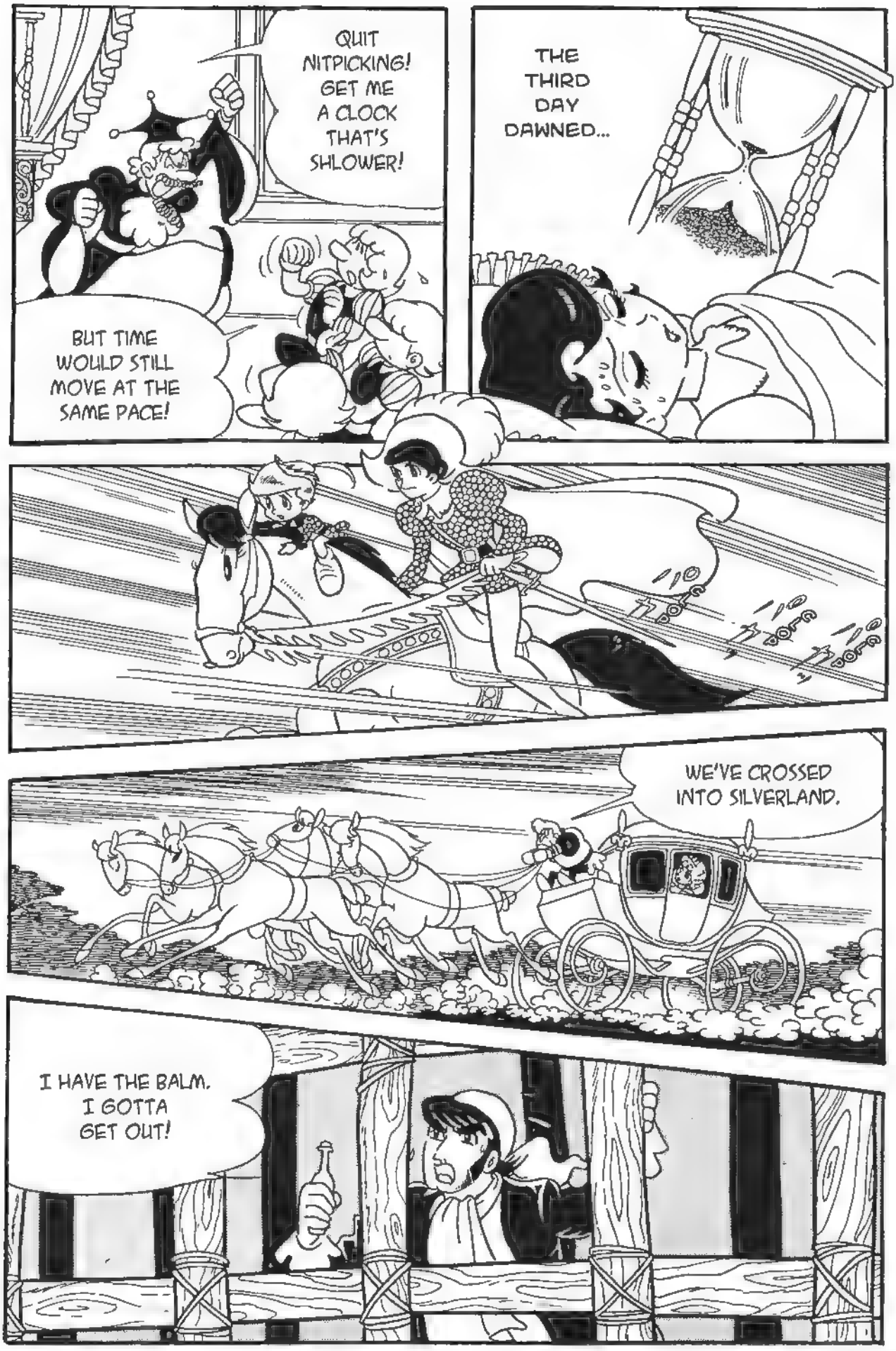
The Queen of Black Pearl Island

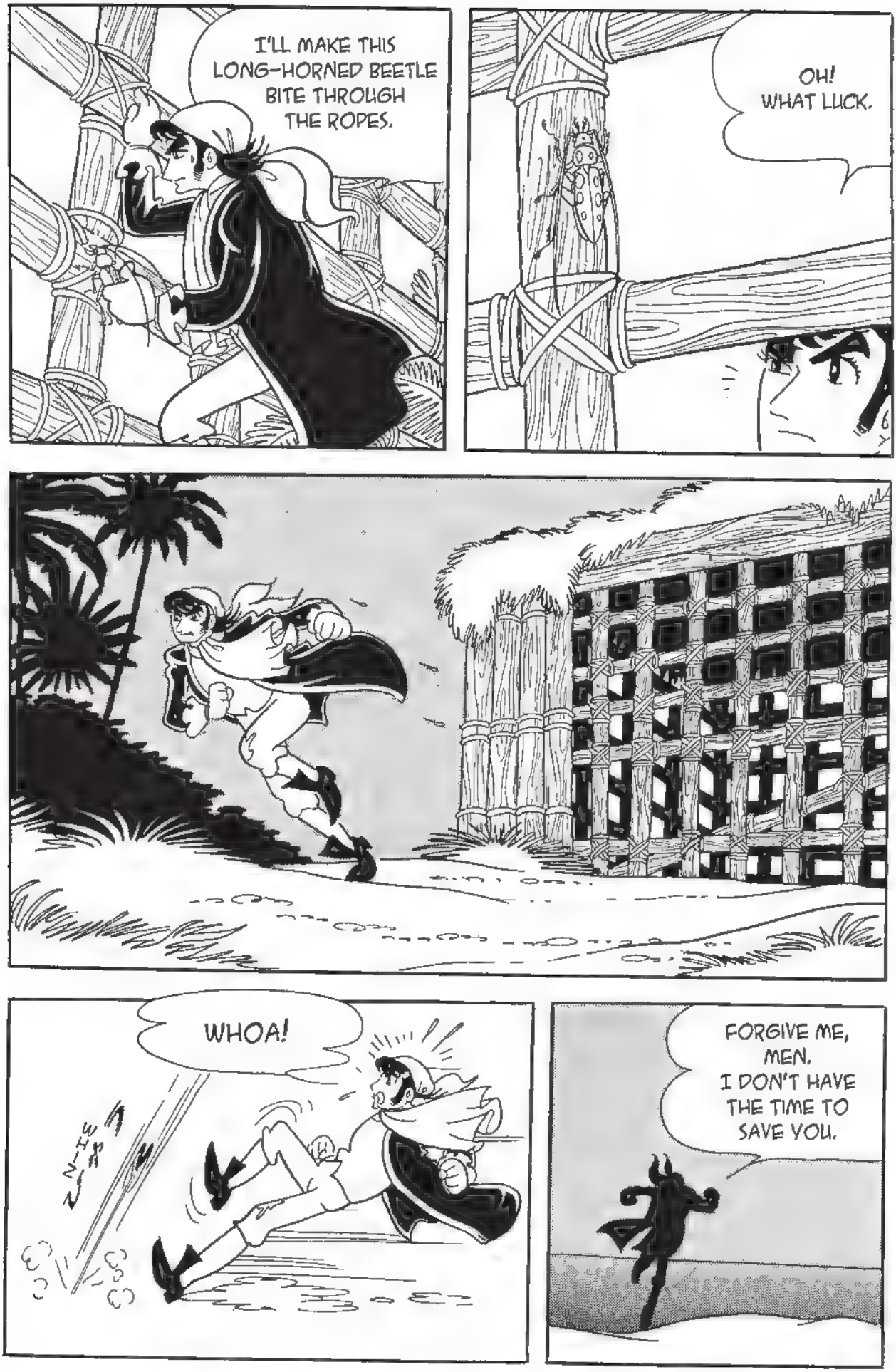

IT'S LOVELY.
BLACK PEARL ISLAND.
WE'RE NEARLY THERE!
わぁ
わぁ
LAND! BLACK PEARL ISLAND!
WELCOME, SAILORS, TO BLACK PEARL ISLAND!
ARE THERE NO MEN HERE?
LOOK, NOTHING BUT GIRLS.
I'VE HEARD YOU HAVE A WONDER DRUG THAT CAN CURE ARROW WOUNDS. WILL YOU SELL IT TO ME?
I'M BLOOD. IT'S SUCH AN HONOR TO BE GREETED BY THE QUEEN HERSELF.
I AM PARPA, QUEEN OF THIS ISLAND.


IF I'M NOT BACK IN 2 DAYS, SHE'LL DIE.
REALLY? GREAT! WE NEED TO GET IT AND HURRY BACK.
HO HO. IT'S TRUE, WE HAVE SUCH A POTION.
SHOW THEM A GOOD TIME, LADIES.
YOU CAN SPARE HALF A DAY. COME, RELAX.
YUMMY!
WOW, THANKS!
SHE?
HRMM... I FEEL DIZZY.
I'LL GET BACK THERE NO MATTER WHAT.
SAPPHIRE, HANG ON FOR JUST ONE MORE DAY. I'LL BE BACK.

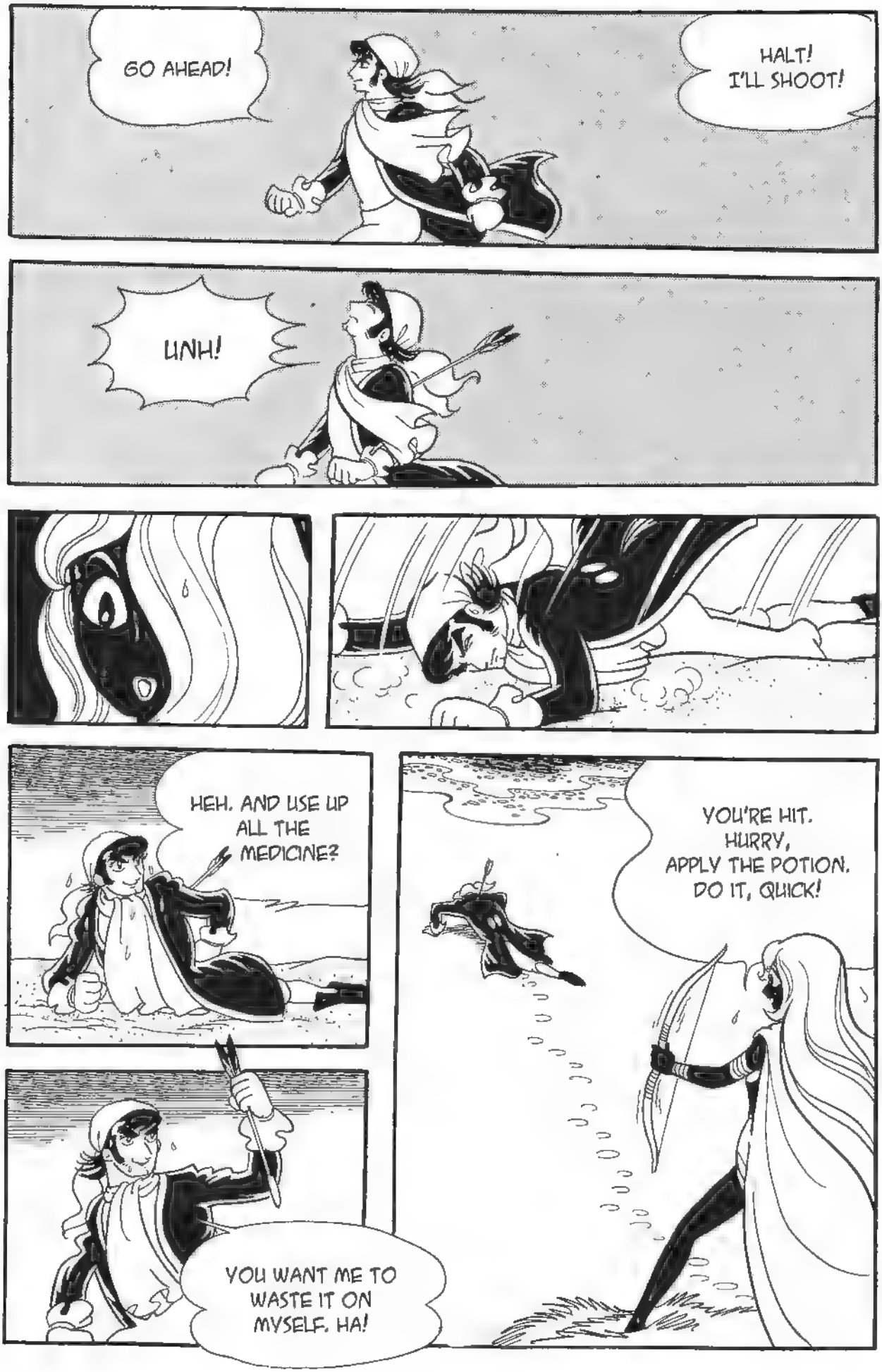
THIS IS IT...?
IT'S RIGHT HERE.
G-GIMME THAT DRUG ...
HO HO HO
HO HO HO! MEN ARE MUCH-NEEDED SLAVES ON THIS ISLAND! I'LL NEVER LET YOU RETURN TO THE SEAS! HO HO HO!
WHERE'S MY CREW? WHY AM I LOCKED UP HERE?
OH! HEY, WHERE AM I?!

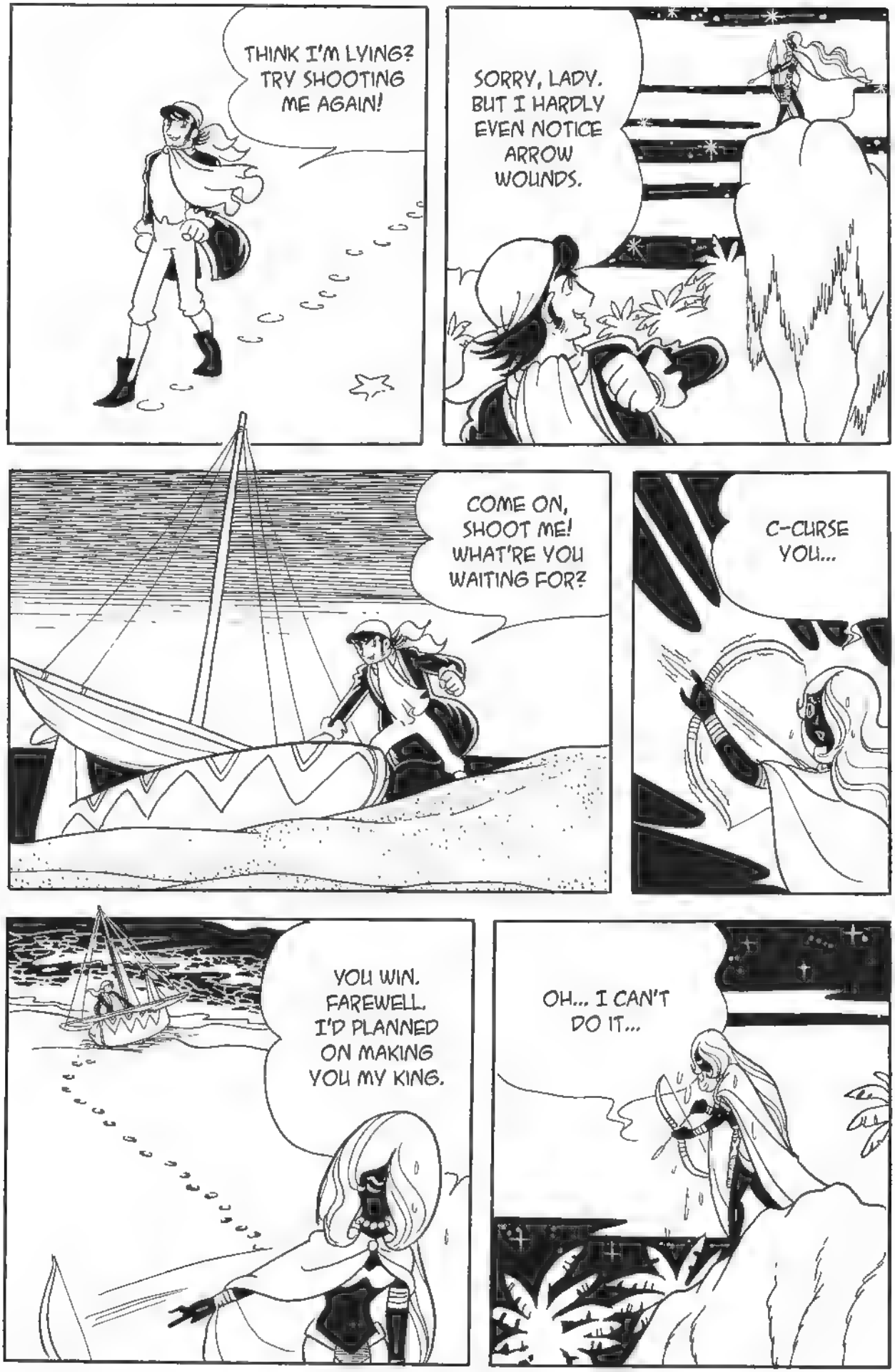
YOUR MEN ARE WORKING. HAULING WATER, CHOPPING FIREWOOD...
DAMMIT, SHE TRICKED ME!
NO! LET ME OUT! I CAN'T STAY HERE!
I'M SORRY, SAPPHIRE!! DON'T DIE ON ME! STAY ALIVE UNTIL I GET BACK TO YOU!
OH, HO HO HO HO HO! IMPOSSIBLE!

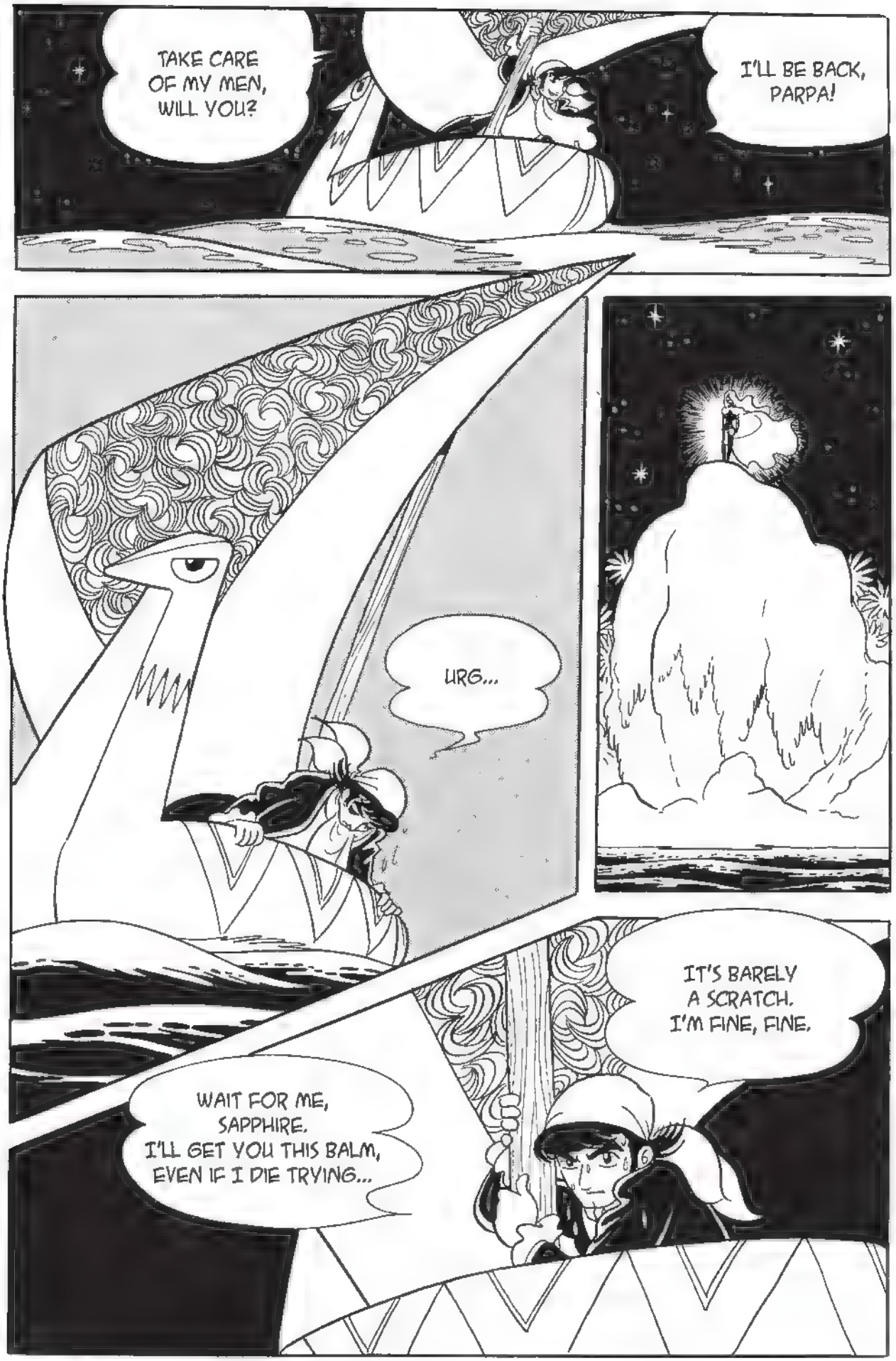

QUIT NITPICKING! GET ME A CLOCK THAT'S SHLOWER!
BUT TIME WOULD STILL MOVE AT THE SAME PACE!
THE THIRD DAY DAWNED...
WE'VE CROSSED INTO SILVERLAND.
I HAVE THE BALM. I GOTTA GET OUT!

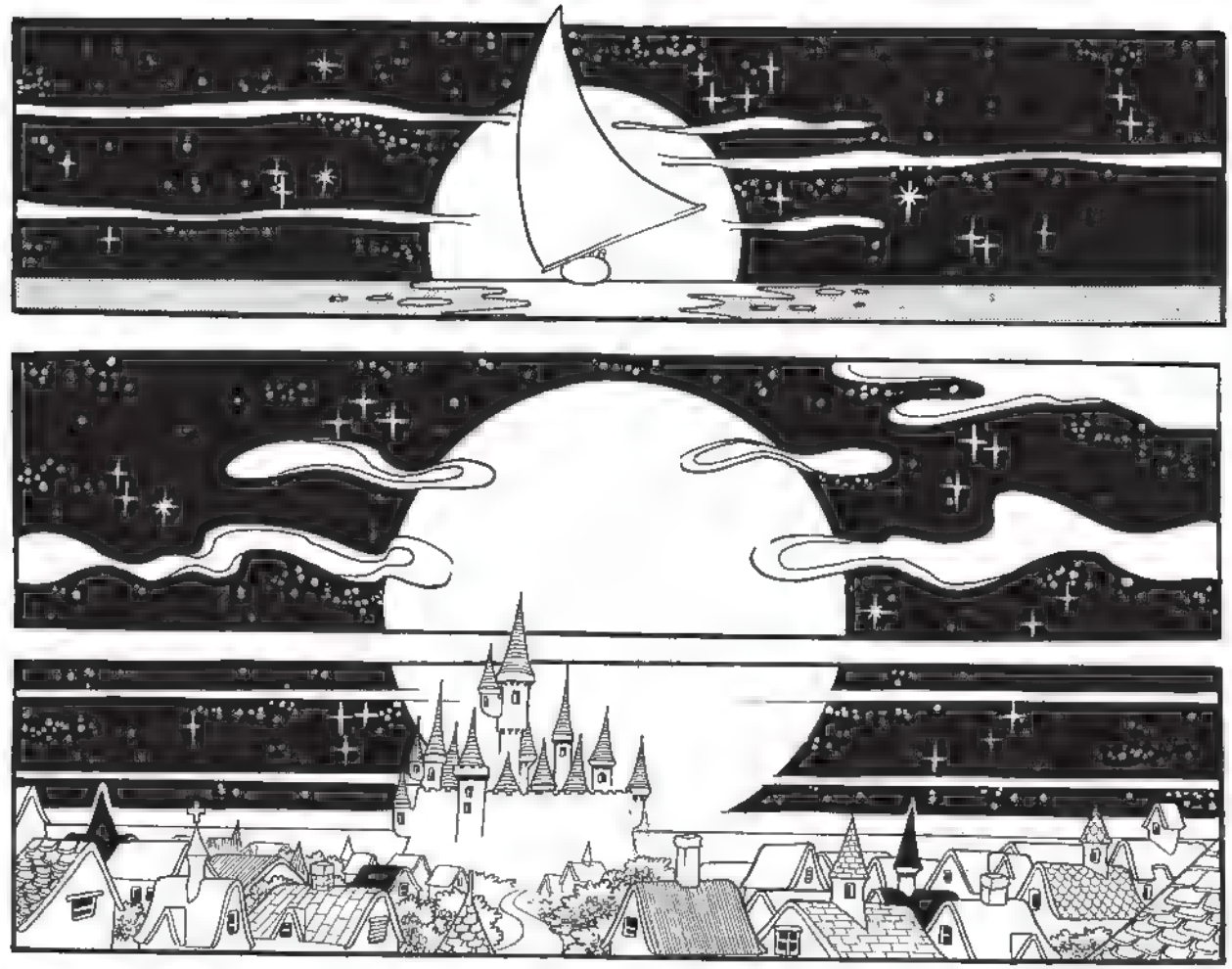

I'LL MAKE THIS LONG-HORNED BEETLE BITE THROUGH THE ROPES.
OH! WHAT LUCK.
WHOA!
FORGIVE ME, MEN. I DON'T HAVE THE TIME TO SAVE YOU.

YOU REALLY WANT TO GO BACK TO HER THAT BADLY? BUT THIS ISLAND IS LOVELY!
HO HO HO HO! WHERE DO YOU THINK YOU'RE GOING? I TOLD YOU I'D NEVER LET YOU GO BACK TO THE SEA!
SHE NEEDS THIS BALM. 'BYE!
DAMN YOU, PARPA.
I'LL STOP YOU.
I'D LIKE TO SEE YOU TRY.
THAT'S ALL I NEED.
THERE'S ONLY ENOUGH FOR ONE PERSON.

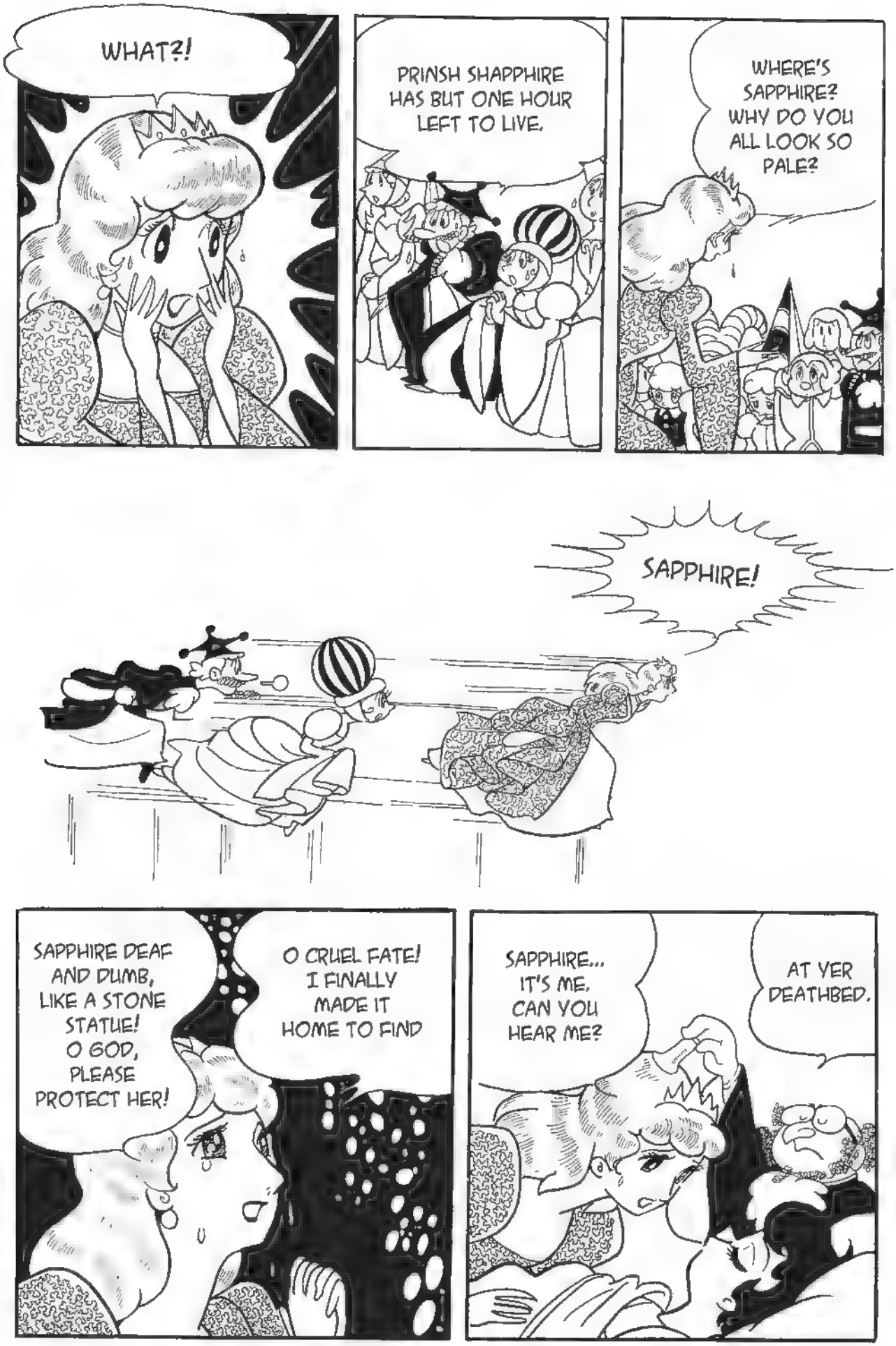

GO AHEAD!
HALT! I'LL SHOOT!
UNH!
HEH. AND USE UP ALL THE MEDICINE?
YOU'RE HIT. HURRY, APPLY THE POTION. DO IT, QUICK!
YOU WANT ME TO WASTE IT ON MYSELF. HA!


THINK I'M LYING? TRY SHOOTING ME AGAIN!
SORRY, LADY. BUT I HARDLY EVEN NOTICE ARROW WOUNDS.
COME ON, SHOOT ME! WHAT'RE YOU WAITING FOR?
C-CURSE YOU...
YOU WIN. FAREWELL. I'D PLANNED ON MAKING YOU MY KING.
OH... I CAN'T DO IT...


TAKE CARE OF MY MEN, WILL YOU?
I'LL BE BACK, PARPA!
URG...
IT'S BARELY A SCRATCH. I'M FINE, FINE.
WAIT FOR ME, SAPPHIRE. I'LL GET YOU THIS BALM, EVEN IF I DIE TRYING...



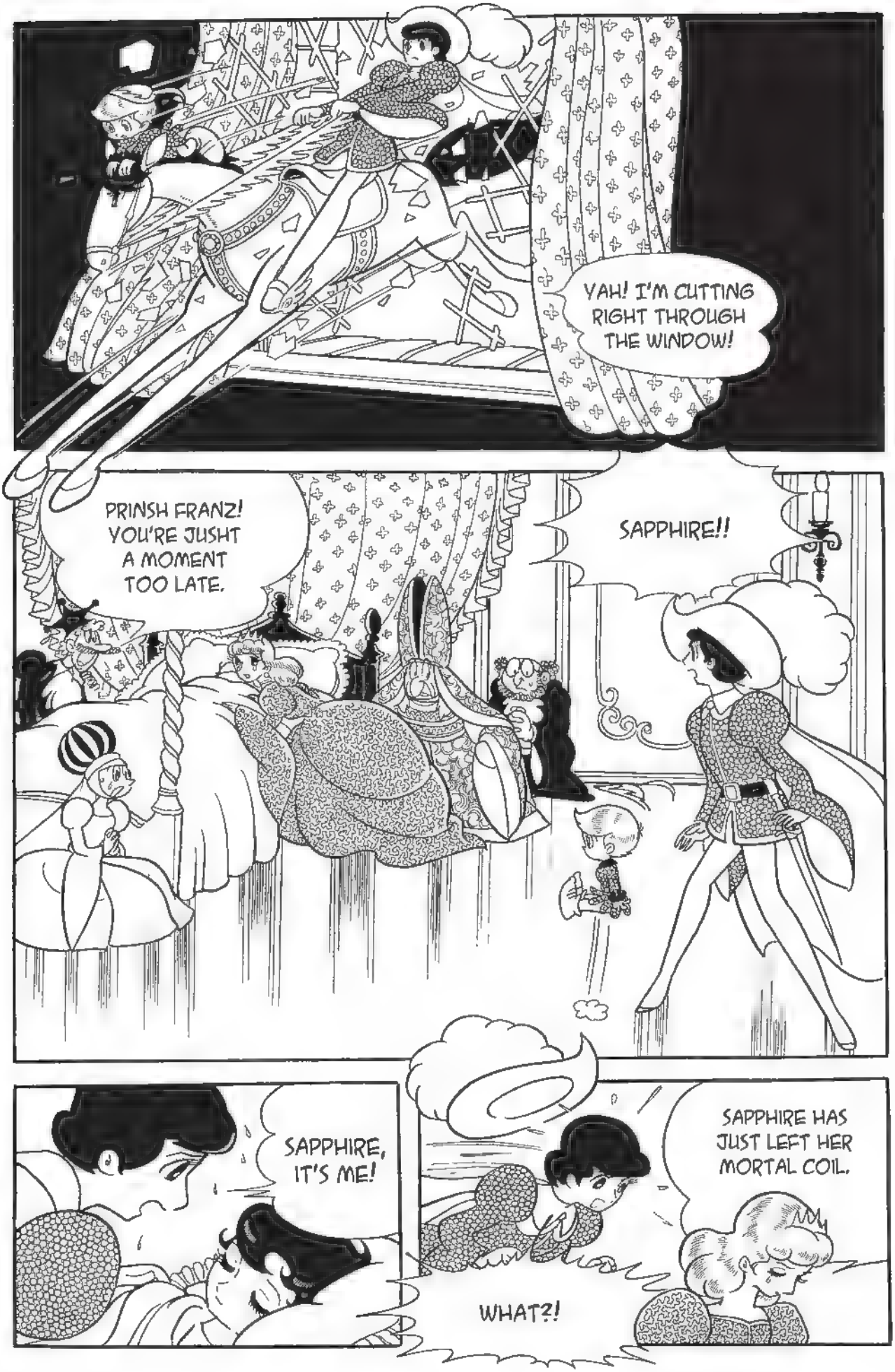
DOCTOR, NURSE! I'M SO SORRY TO MAKE YOU WORRY.
THE QUEEN HAS RETURNED!
OH! MY QUEEN!
HOW ARE YOU, MILADY?

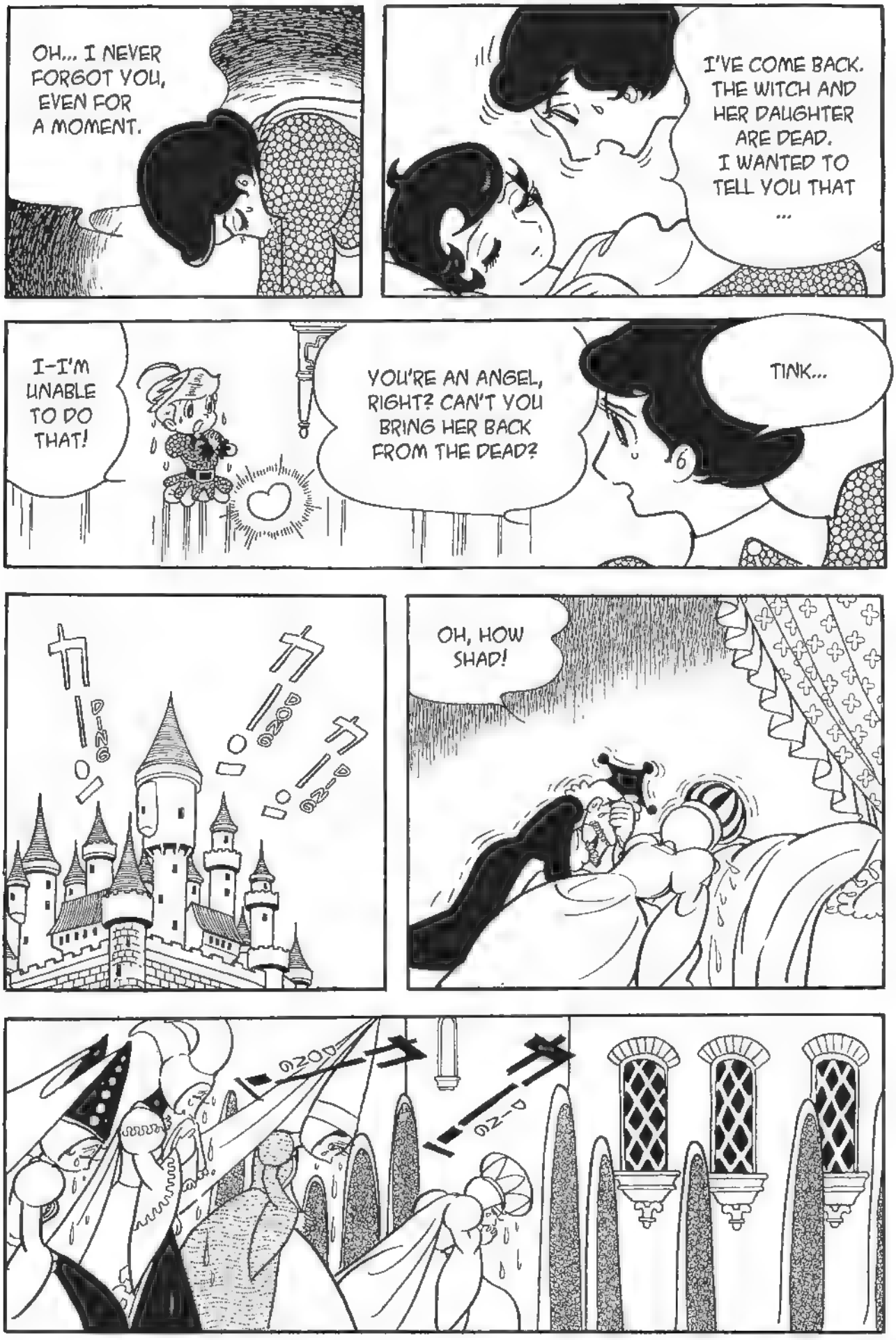

WHAT?!
PRINSH SHAPPHIRE HAS BUT ONE HOUR LEFT TO LIVE.
WHERE'S SAPPHIRE? WHY DO YOU ALL LOOK SO PALE?
SAPPHIRE!
SAPPHIRE DEAF AND DUMB, LIKE A STONE STATUE! O GOD, PLEASE PROTECT HER!
O CRUEL FATE! I FINALLY MADE IT HOME TO FIND
SAPPHIRE... IT'S ME. CAN YOU HEAR ME?
AT YER DEATHBED.

BLOOD'S BACK!!
OH!
ARROW... WOUND... BALM. G-GIVE THIS... TO SAPPHIRE...
AAAAH!
WHUMP
YOU SACRIFISHED YOURSHELF TO GET THISH BALM TO USH?
THE POTION!
THIS IS...

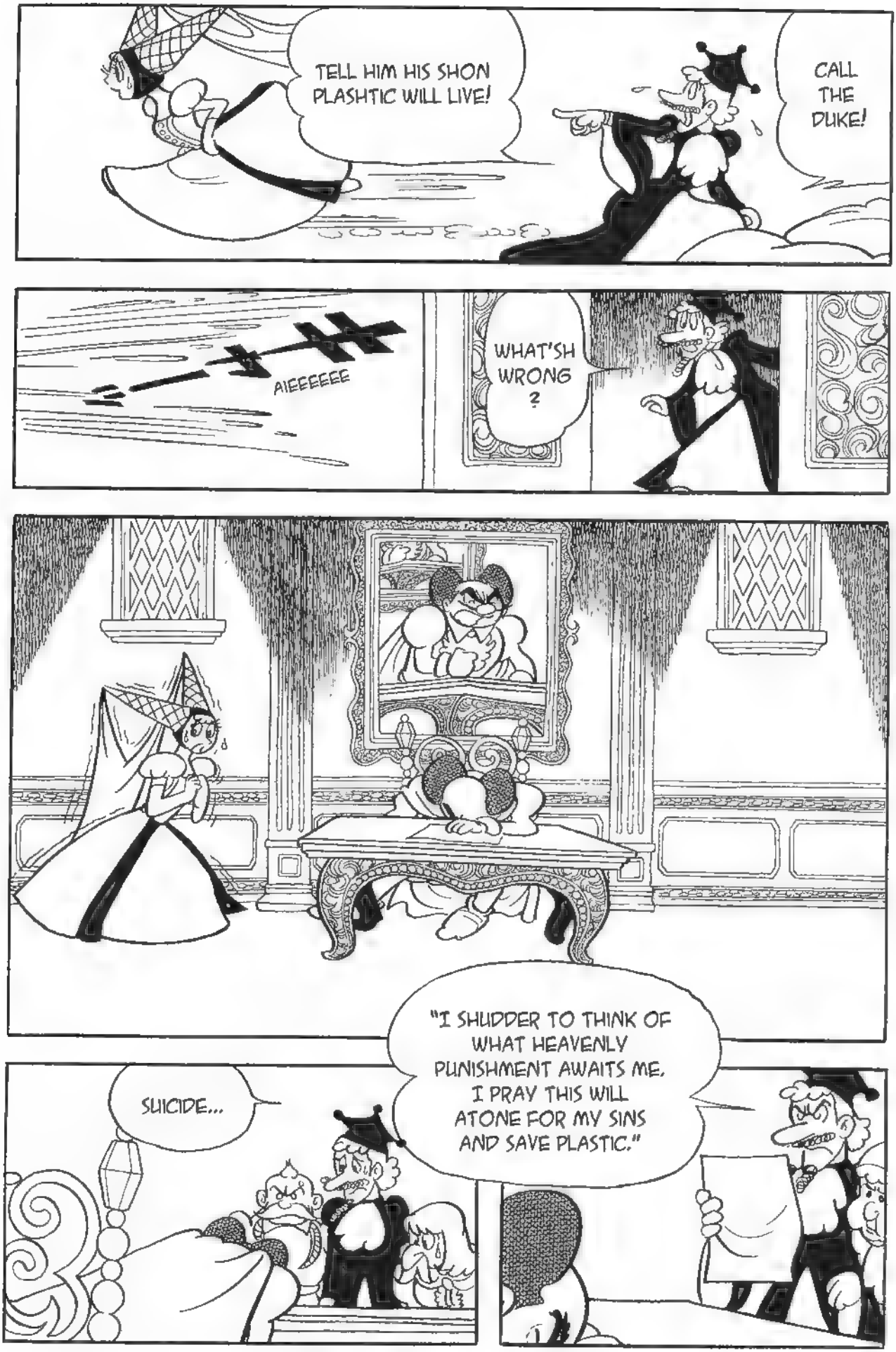
IF YOU SEE FRANZ, TELL HIM, IF HE TRULY LOVES SAPPHIRE... HE'S AN IDIOT...
DYING ON LAND? HOW UNSEEMLY FOR A PIRATE. HEH.
HURRY UP AND GET THAT BALM TO SAPPHIRE, DOCTOR!
MAY HIS SOUL FIND PEACE.
WHAT A BRAVE MAN.
PRINSH!!
AH, DOCTOR, SAPPHIRE IS...

SAPPHIRE, LOOK! MEDICINE! I'LL GIVE IT TO YOU RIGHT AWAY, OK? SAPPHIRE?
H-HURRY!
QUEEN! THE BALM!
SHE HAS PASSED AWAY.
MY SAPPHIRE! PLEASE, OPEN YOUR EYES!

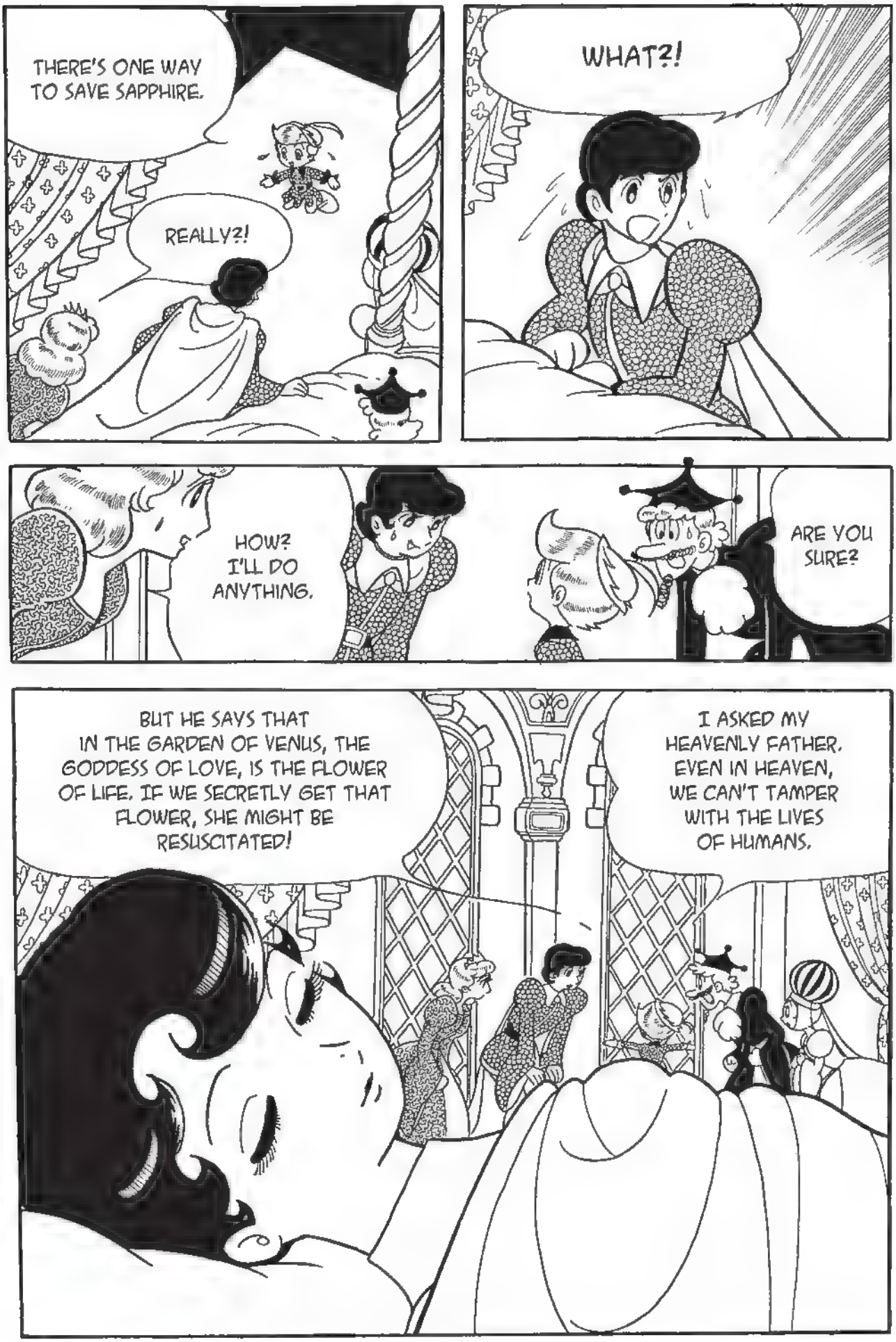

YAH! I'M CUTTING RIGHT THROUGH THE WINDOW!
PRINSH FRANZ! YOU'RE JUSHT A MOMENT TOO LATE.
SAPPHIRE!!
SAPPHIRE, IT'S ME!
SAPPHIRE HAS JUST LEFT HER MORTAL COIL.
WHAT?!


OH... I NEVER FORGOT YOU, EVEN FOR A MOMENT.
I'VE COME BACK. THE WITCH AND HER DAUGHTER ARE DEAD. I WANTED TO TELL YOU THAT ...
I-I'M UNABLE TO DO THAT!
YOU'RE AN ANGEL, RIGHT? CAN'T YOU BRING HER BACK FROM THE DEAD?
TINK...
D-ING
OH, HOW SHAD!

I FINALLY GOT HER GIRL HEART,
O FATHER! THIS IS TERRIBLE! TOO TERRIBLE!
THAT'S TERRIBLE !
YET YOU KILLED HER!
Y- YES.
DOCTOR... LET'S NOT LET THE BALM GO TO WASTE. GIVE IT TO PLASTIC.
IF ONLY WE'D GIVEN IT TO SHAPPHIRE SHOONER...
LOOK! IT WORKS SO QUICKLY! THE COLOR IS RETURNING TO HIS FACE.

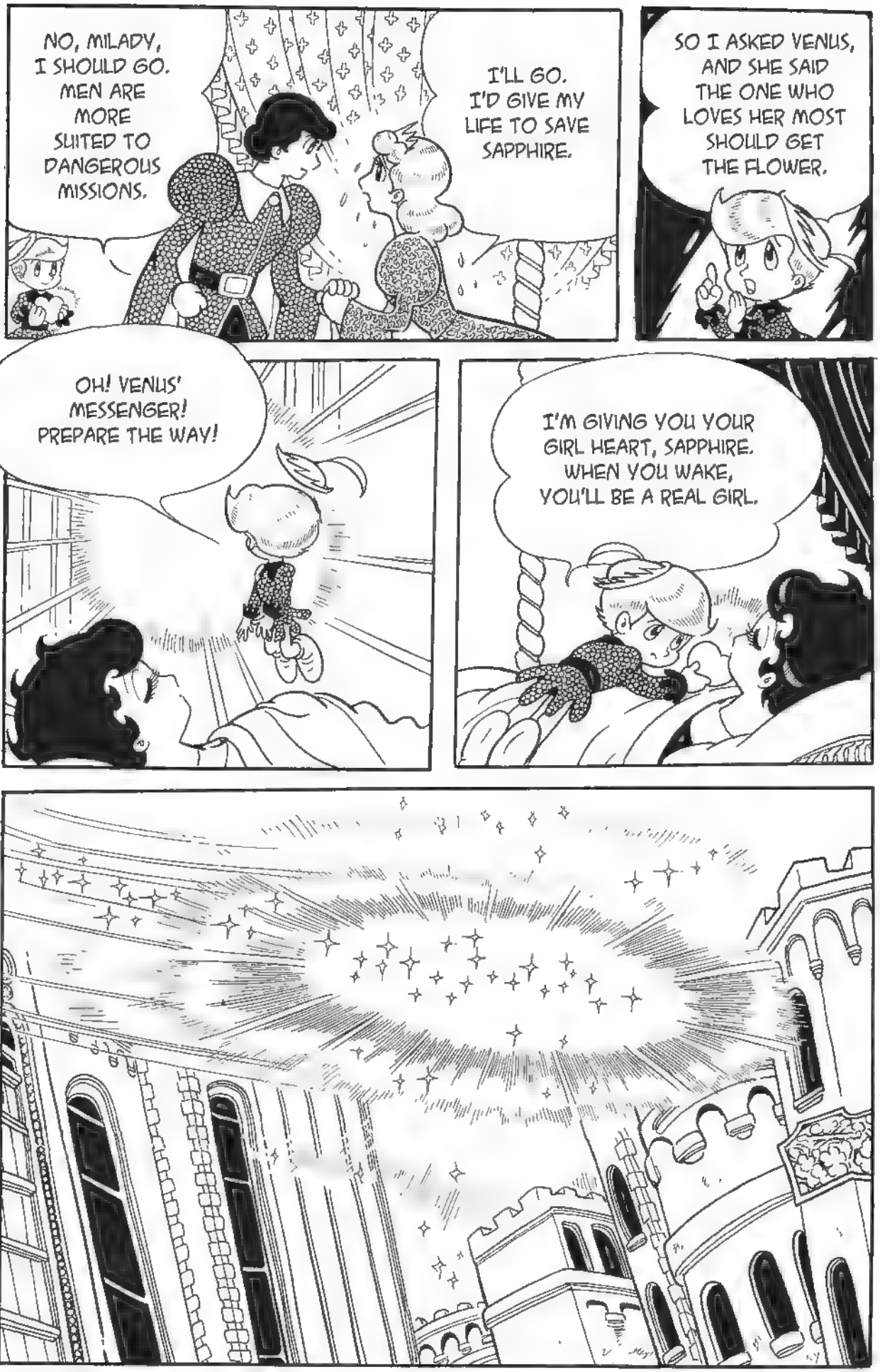

TELL HIM HIS SHON PLASHTIC WILL LIVE!
CALL THE DUKE!
AIEEEEEE
WHAT'SH WRONG ?
"I SHUDDER TO THINK OF WHAT HEAVENLY PUNISHMENT AWAITS ME. I PRAY THIS WILL ATONE FOR MY SINS AND SAVE PLASTIC."
SUICIDE...

REST IN PEACE.
BLOOD, YOU MAY HAVE BEEN MY BROTHER...
TAKE HIM TO THE CHAPEL.
...

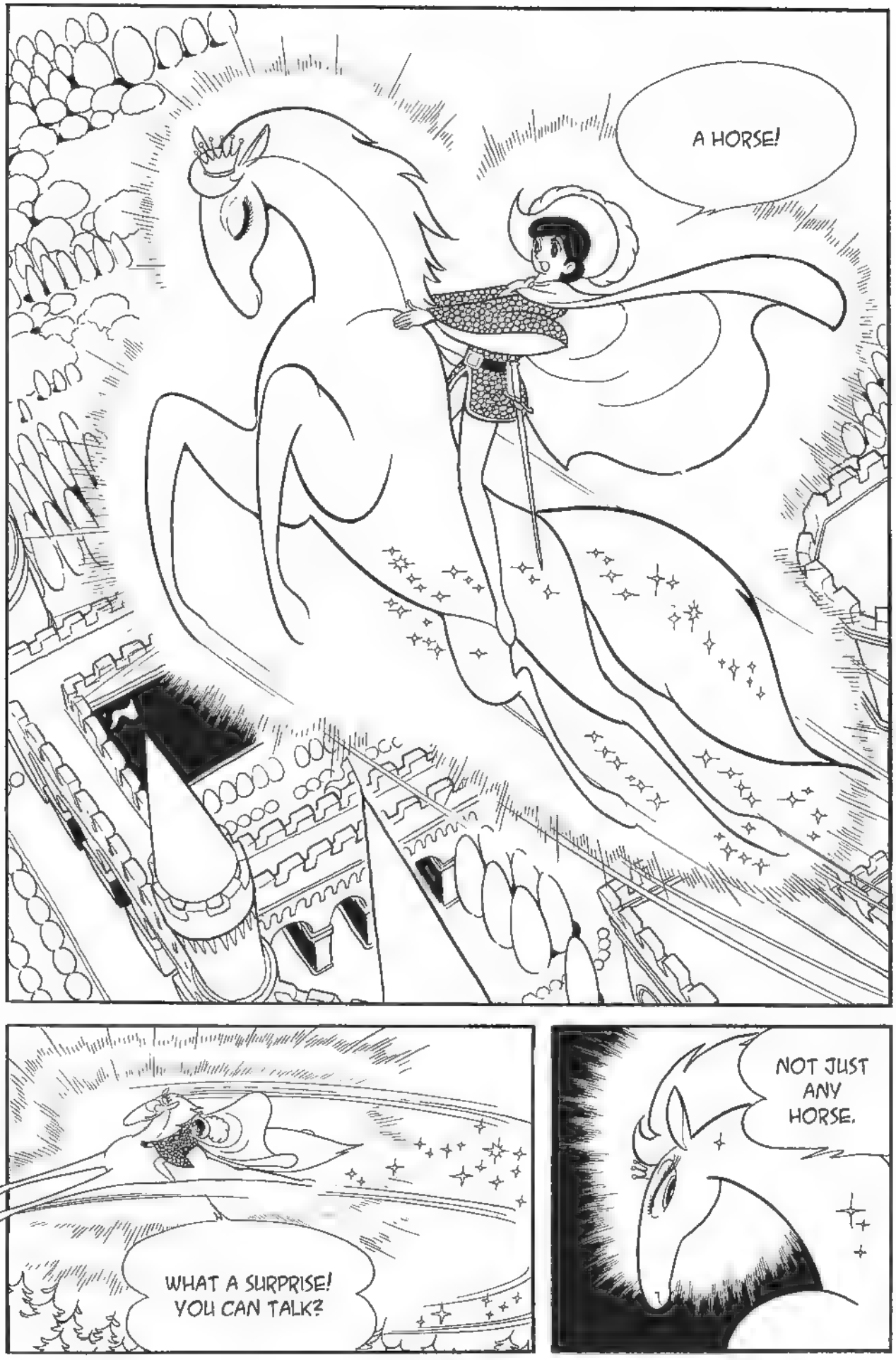

THERE'S ONE WAY TO SAVE SAPPHIRE.
REALLY?!
WHAT?!
HOW? I'LL DO ANYTHING.
ARE YOU SURE?
BUT HE SAYS THAT IN THE GARDEN OF VENUS, THE GODDESS OF LOVE, IS THE FLOWER OF LIFE. IF WE SECRETLY GET THAT FLOWER, SHE MIGHT BE RESUSCITATED!
I ASKED MY HEAVENLY FATHER. EVEN IN HEAVEN, WE CAN'T TAMPER WITH THE LIVES OF HUMANS.

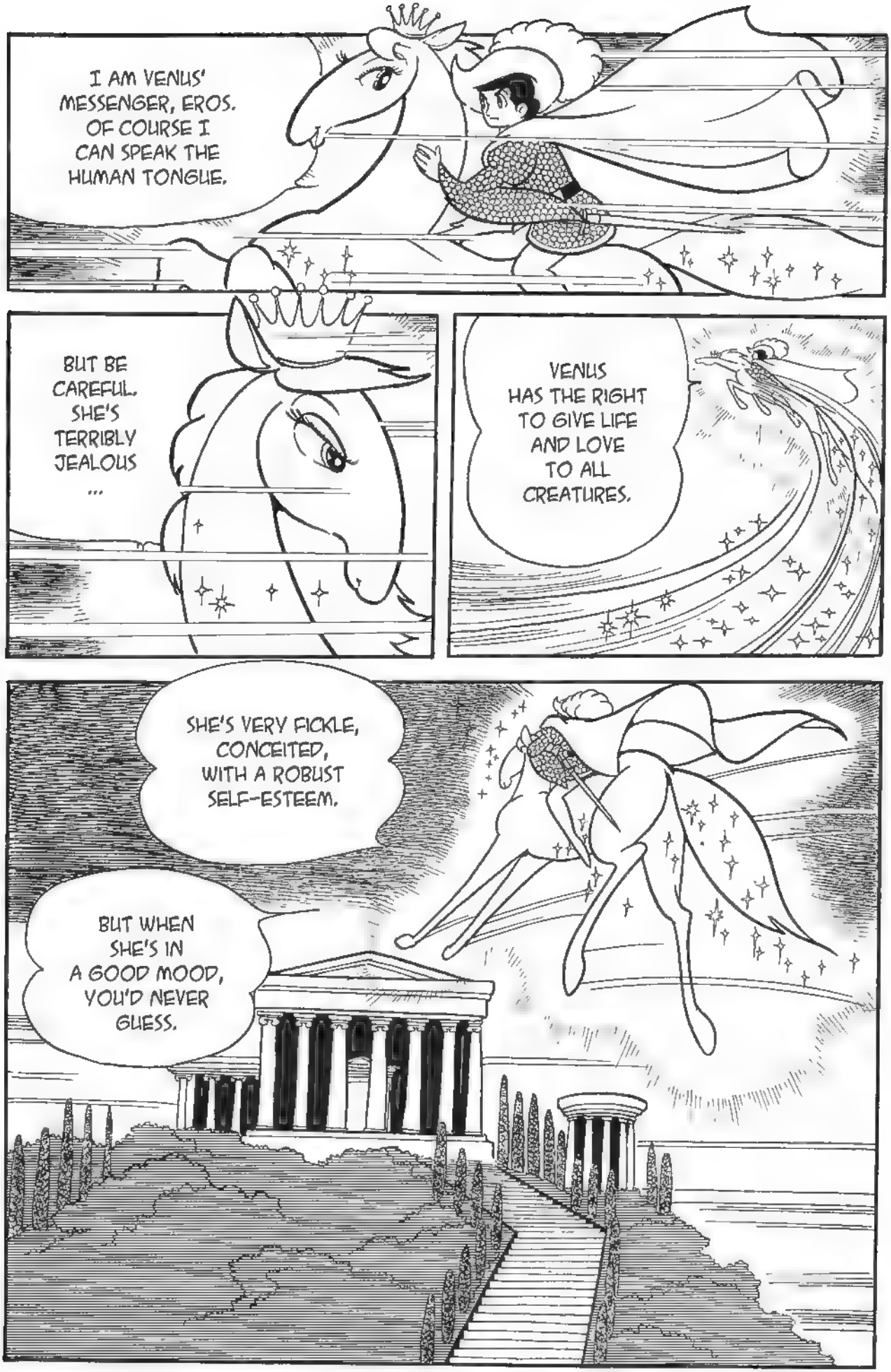
Chapter 24

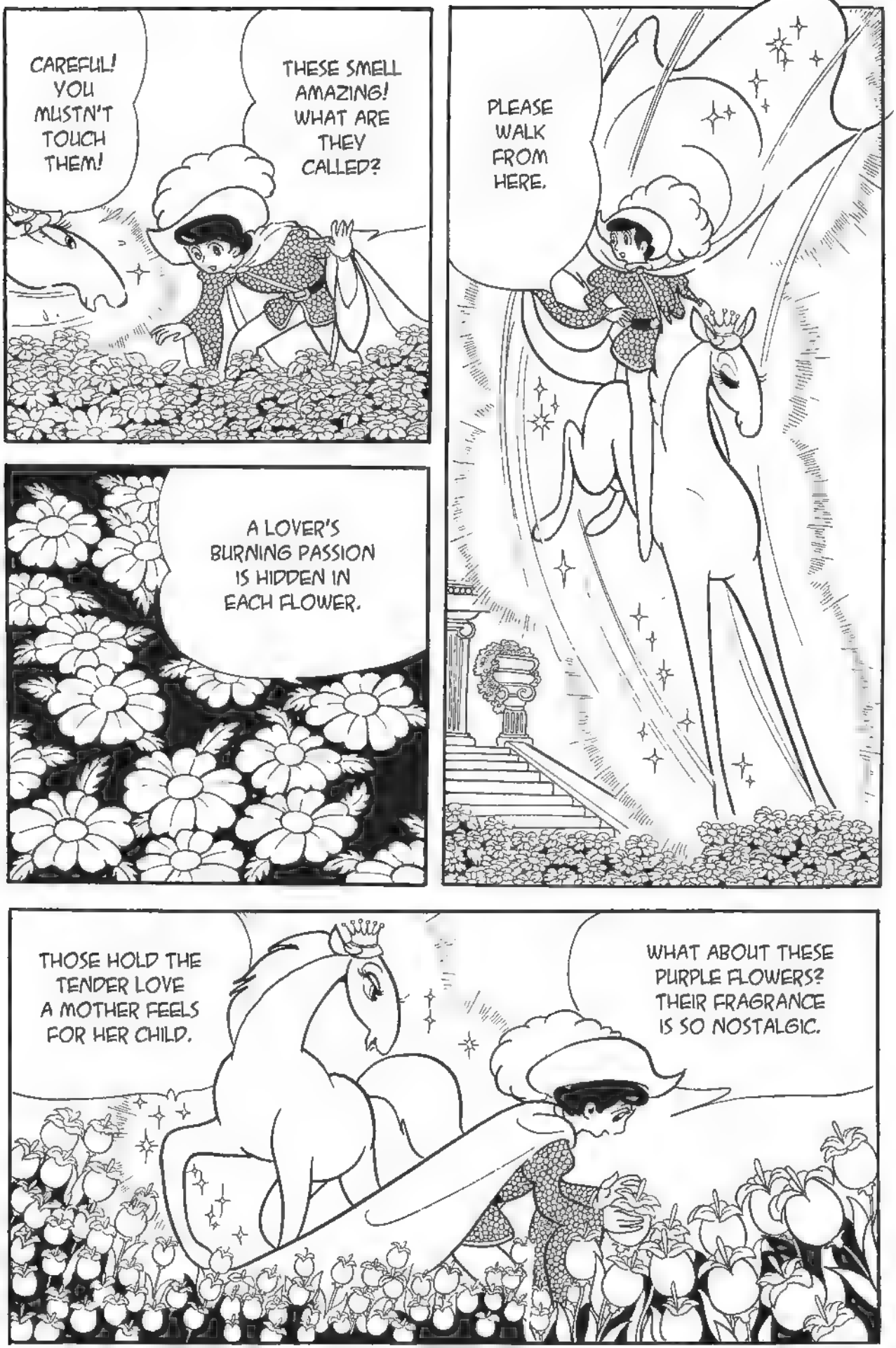
The Garden of Venus


NO, MILADY, I SHOULD GO. MEN ARE MORE SUITED TO DANGEROUS MISSIONS.
I'LL GO. I'D GIVE MY LIFE TO SAVE SAPPHIRE.
SO I ASKED VENUS, AND SHE SAID THE ONE WHO LOVES HER MOST SHOULD GET THE FLOWER.
OH! VENUS' MESSENGER! PREPARE THE WAY!
I'M GIVING YOU YOUR GIRL HEART, SAPPHIRE. WHEN YOU WAKE, YOU'LL BE A REAL GIRL.

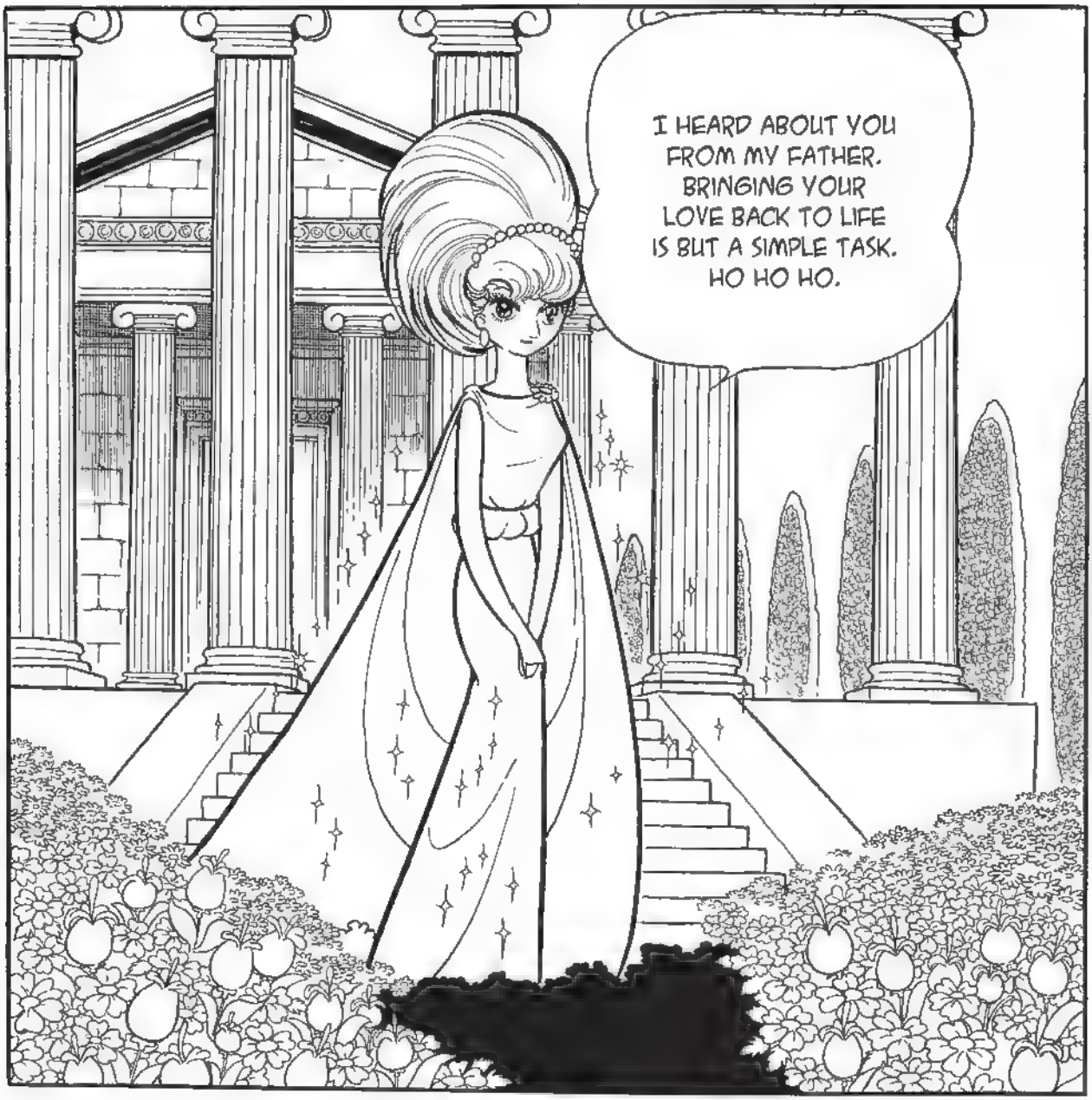
I'VE COME TO LEAD ONE OF YOU TO THE GARDEN OF VENUS.
I AM EROS.
OW! MY NECK!
SO BRIGHT!
YOUR BACK? WHOA!
I'LL GO, BUT... HOW?
CLIMB ONTO MY BACK.


A HORSE!
WHAT A SURPRISE! YOU CAN TALK?
NOT JUST ANY HORSE.


I AM VENUS' MESSENGER, EROS. OF COURSE I CAN SPEAK THE HUMAN TONGUE.
BUT BE CAREFUL. SHE'S TERRIBLY JEALOUS ...
VENUS HAS THE RIGHT TO GIVE LIFE AND LOVE TO ALL CREATURES.
SHE'S VERY FICKLE, CONCEITED, WITH A ROBUST SELF-ESTEEM.
BUT WHEN SHE'S IN A GOOD MOOD, YOU'D NEVER GUESS.


CAREFUL! YOU MUSTN'T TOUCH THEM!
THESE SMELL AMAZING! WHAT ARE THEY CALLED?
PLEASE WALK FROM HERE.
A LOVER'S BURNING PASSION IS HIDDEN IN EACH FLOWER.
THOSE HOLD THE TENDER LOVE A MOTHER FEELS FOR HER CHILD.
WHAT ABOUT THESE PURPLE FLOWERS? THEIR FRAGRANCE IS SO NOSTALGIC.

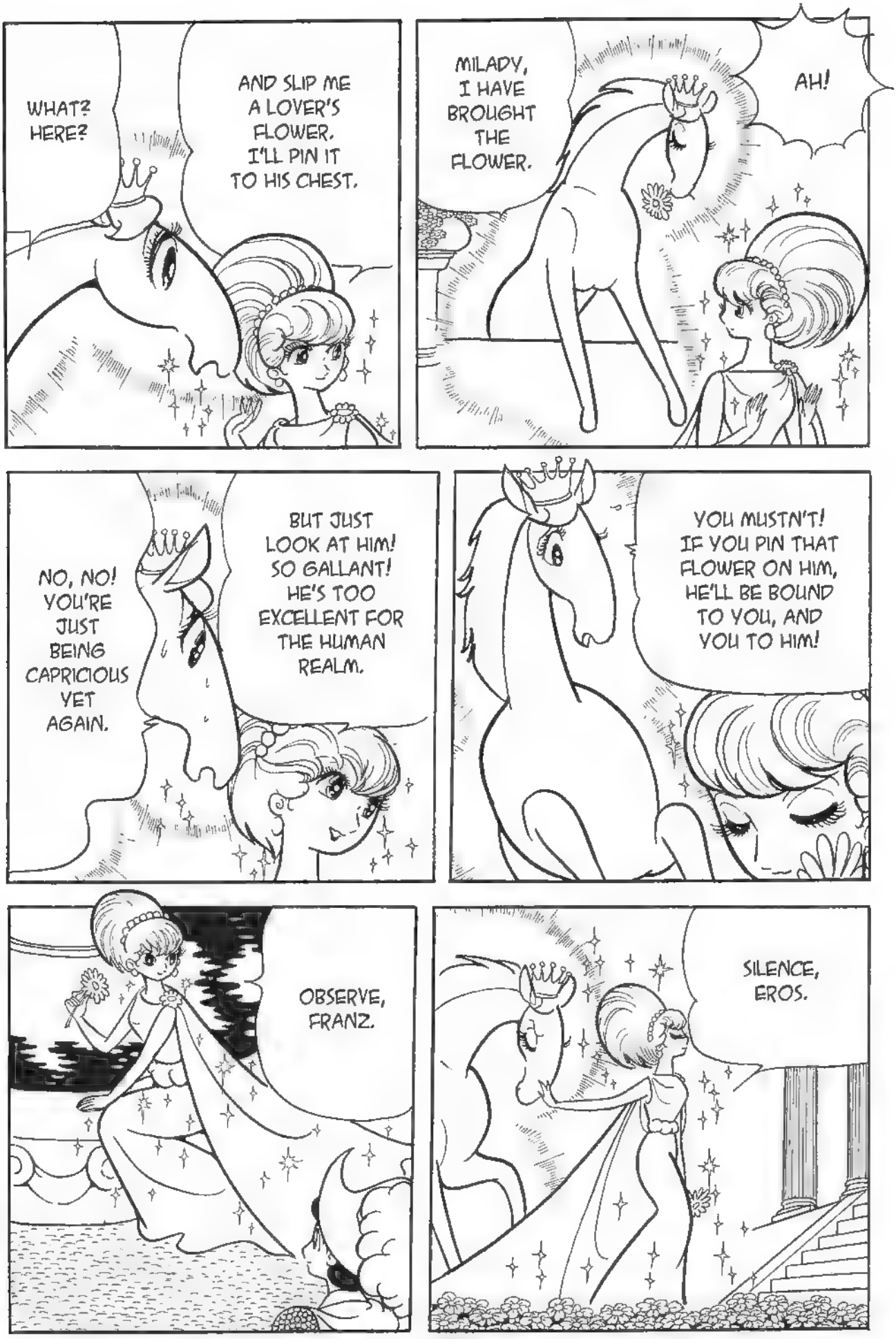
WHAT ABOUT THESE BLACK FLOWERS?
THOSE ARE FOR THE LOVE OF DEATH. YOUR PRINCESS SAPPHIRE WAS GIVEN ONE.
OH! VENUS HAS APPEARED!
LOVE OF DEATH? HOW VERY DREAD-FUL!
MY DUTY IS TO TEND TO THE FLOWERS AND HELP VENUS PICK THEM WHEN SHE NEEDS THEM.
THESE ARE FOR THE LOVE OF NATURE. THE YELLOW ONES ARE FOR THE LOVE OF FRIENDS, AND THE ORANGE HOLD LOVE FOR ONE'S ENEMIES.

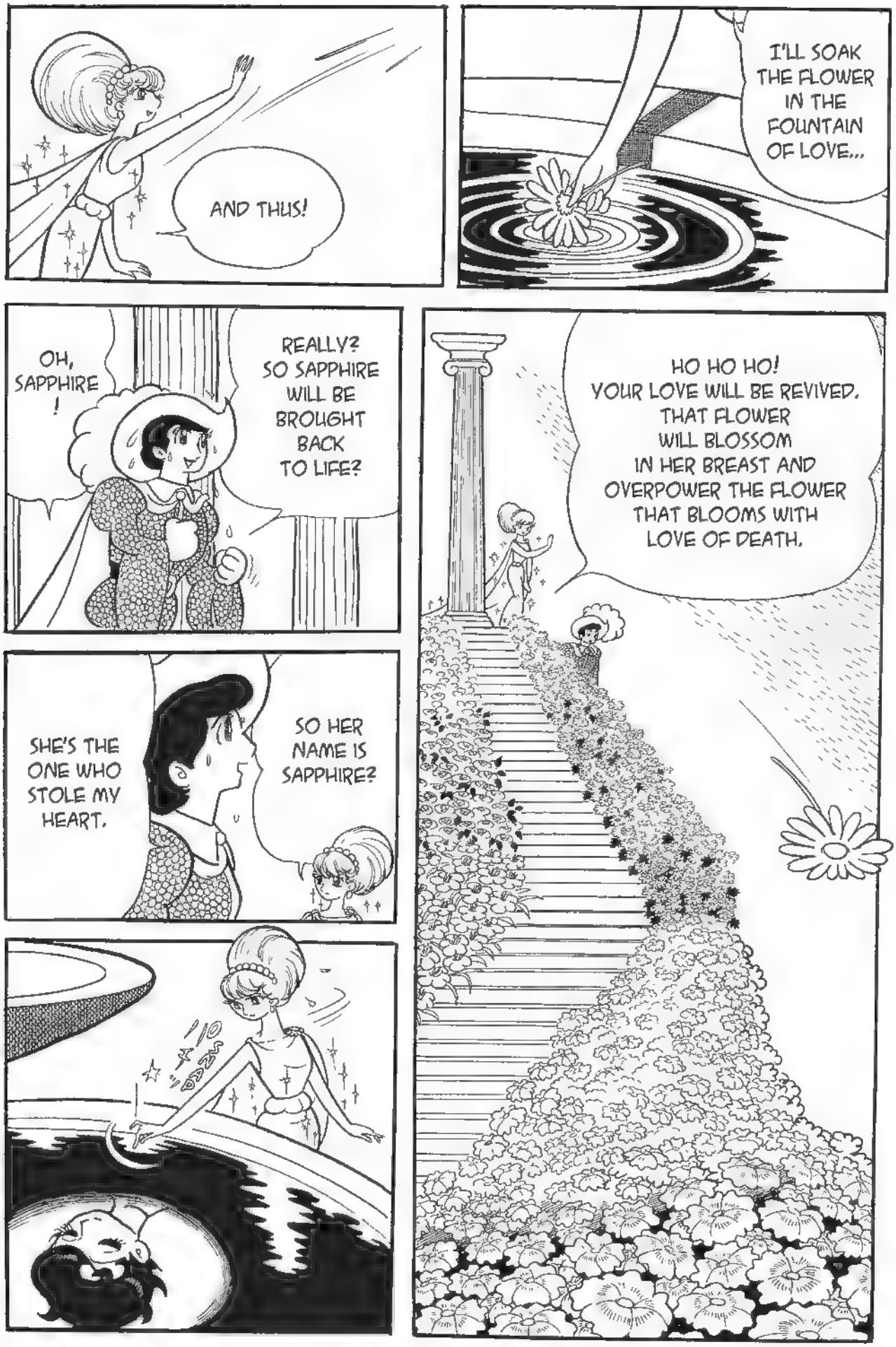

I HEARD ABOUT YOU FROM MY FATHER. BRINGING YOUR LOVE BACK TO LIFE IS BUT A SIMPLE TASK. HO HO HO.

THIS IS THE FOUNTAIN OF LOVE. I WATER THE FLOWERS WITH ITS WATERS.

SHE'S TOO BEAUTIFUL... I'M GETTING CHILLS!

YES, VENUS.
EROS, BRING ME THE FLOWER FOR LOVE OF REBIRTH.
FRANZ CHARMING ...
I AM PRINCE FRANZ CHARMING OF GOLDLAND.
YOU'RE VERY HANDSOME. THERE'S NO ONE LIKE YOU EVEN ON MOUNT OLYMPUS. TELL ME YOUR NAME.


WHAT? HERE?
AND SLIP ME A LOVER'S FLOWER. I'LL PIN IT TO HIS CHEST.
MILADY, I HAVE BROUGHT THE FLOWER.
AH!
NO, NO! YOU'RE JUST BEING CAPRICIOUS YET AGAIN.
BUT JUST LOOK AT HIM! SO GALLANT! HE'S TOO EXCELLENT FOR THE HUMAN REALM.
YOU MUSTN'T! IF YOU PIN THAT FLOWER ON HIM, HE'LL BE BOUND TO YOU, AND YOU TO HIM!
OBSERVE, FRANZ.
SILENCE, EROS.


AND THUS!
I'LL SOAK THE FLOWER IN THE FOUNTAIN OF LOVE...
OH, SAPPHIRE !
REALLY? SO SAPPHIRE WILL BE BROUGHT BACK TO LIFE?
HO HO HO! YOUR LOVE WILL BE REVIVED. THAT FLOWER WILL BLOSSOM IN HER BREAST AND OVERPOWER THE FLOWER THAT BLOOMS WITH LOVE OF DEATH.
SHE'S THE ONE WHO STOLE MY HEART.
SO HER NAME IS SAPPHIRE?
SIGH

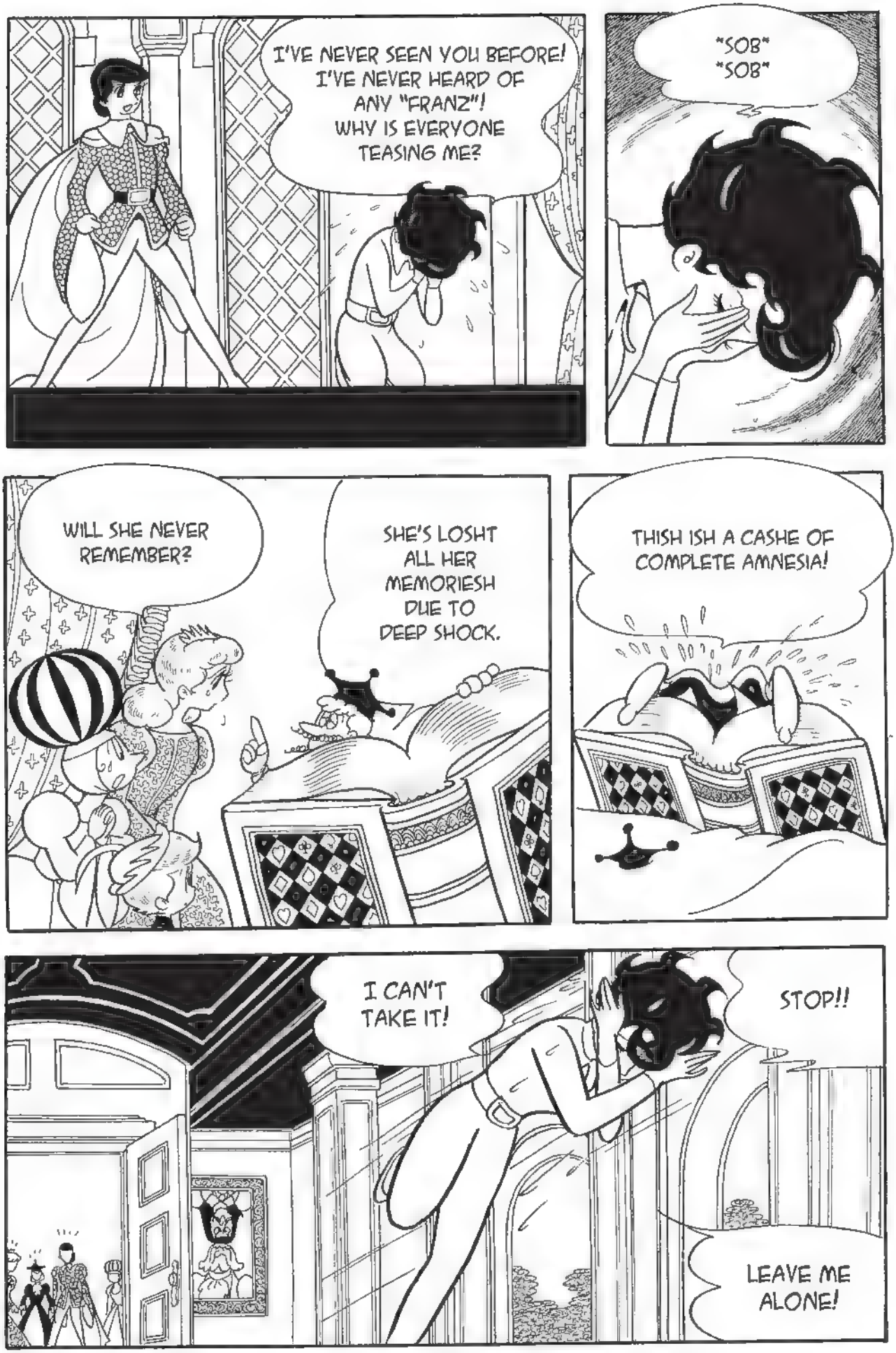
PLEASE EXCUSE ME, VENUS.
WAIT, FRANZ! IF YOU MARRY HER, YOU'LL NEVER FIND HAPPINESS. YOU NEED A STRONGER, MORE PASSIONATE LOVE.
SAPPHIRE! I'LL MAKE YOU THE MOST MISERABLE WOMAN IN THE WORLD AND MAKE FRANZ BEND TO MY WILL! HO HO HO!

LIT THE FIRE OF LIFE IN SAPPHIRE'S BREAST AS SHE DRIFTED IN DEATH'S COLD SLUMBER.
THE FLOWER OF REBIRTH TOSSED BY VENUS...
A HEART BEAT !
AH!
PRINSH!
HER EYELIDS ARE MOVING! SHE'S ALIVE!
OH, SAPPHIRE!
SAPPHIRE!

HURRY! BRING WATER! WATER WATER WATER!
THANK YOU LORD!
NO, IDIOTSH! NOT A FIRE!
HUP TWO!
LOOKS LIKE IT WORKED.
BLING
BE CAREFUL, FRANZ. VENUS...
HAS HER EYE ON YOU.
EROS, I DON'T KNOW HOW TO THANK YOU.

FAREWELL, FRANZ!
BUT IF YOUR LOVE FOR SAPPHIRE STAYS STRONG, SHE WILL BE SAVED.
I DON'T KNOW WHAT SHE'LL DO...
OOH!
SAPPHIRE!
HUH?
IT'S ME, YOUR MOTHER!
WHERE AM I? WHAT WAS I DOING?
OH... OH!

WHAT? DON'T YOU RECOGNIZE ME? LOOK AT MY FACE!
WHO ARE YOU, LADY?
LOOK AT ME.
I DON'T KNOW WHO ANY OF YOU ARE! I'VE NEVER MET YOU BEFORE! STOP ACTING LIKE YOU KNOW ME SO WELL!
PRINSH !
COME ON, SAPPHIRE !
IT'S ME, TINK!
IT'S YOUR FRANZ.
...


I'VE NEVER SEEN YOU BEFORE! I'VE NEVER HEARD OF ANY "FRANZ"! WHY IS EVERYONE TEASING ME?
"SOB" "SOB"
WILL SHE NEVER REMEMBER?
SHE'S LOSHT ALL HER MEMORIESH DUE TO DEEP SHOCK.
THISH ISH A CASHE OF COMPLETE AMNESIA!
I CAN'T TAKE IT!
STOP!!
LEAVE ME ALONE!

I DON'T REMEMBER ANYTHING AT ALL!
WHO AM I? AM I MALE? FEMALE? WHERE AM I?
WAIT, SAPPHIRE!
LISHTEN TO ME! LET ME EXPLAIN!
OH? WHERE SHOULD I GO? WHERE'S MY HOME?
I KNOW ALL ABOUT YOU. YOU'RE NOT OF THIS CASTLE.
DO NOT BE SO SORROWFUL.
IS IT A MAN? WOMAN? DO THEY KNOW ALL ABOUT ME?
IF YOU WED THAT PERSON, YOU'LL REMEMBER EVERYTHING.
YOU SHOULD GET A HORSE AND RIDE TO THE NORTH. YOU'LL MEET A VERY BELOVED PERSON AS YOU PASS THROUGH THOSE LANDS.

I'LL HEAD NORTH TO FIND MYSELF...
HEH HEH. YES, GO NORTH, TO THE LAND OF ICE AND SNOW.

SO SHE CHANGED OUTFITS AND RAN AWAY?
AH! LOOK, CLOTHES ALL SCATTERED!
PRINSH! OH NO, WHERE'D HE GO?
YOU DON'T RECOGNIZE ME, AND YOU RAN AWAY...
SAPPHIRE, WHAT IS THE MATTER WITH YOU?
NORTH?!
THE PRINCE'S HORSE IS NOT IN ITS STABLE. THERE ARE HOOFPRINTS HEADING NORTH.

I'LL PURSUE HER.
IS THIS THE DEVIL'S WORK?
WONDER HOW FAR NORTH SHE GOT.
I'M JUST GLAD SHE'S ALIVE. NOW WE'VE GOT TO GET HER MEMORY BACK.
WHAT LEADS HER THERE?

EROS!
HO HO!
I KNEW HE'D CHASE
AFTER HER.
HE'S TAKING THIS
SO VERY
SERIOUSLY.
NEIGH?
DON'T COMMENT
ON MY AFFAIRS.
I WILL NOT LET FRANZ
FIND SAPPHIRE.
PLEASE STOP, VENUS.
THIS IS TOO CAPRICIOUS,
EVEN FOR YOU!

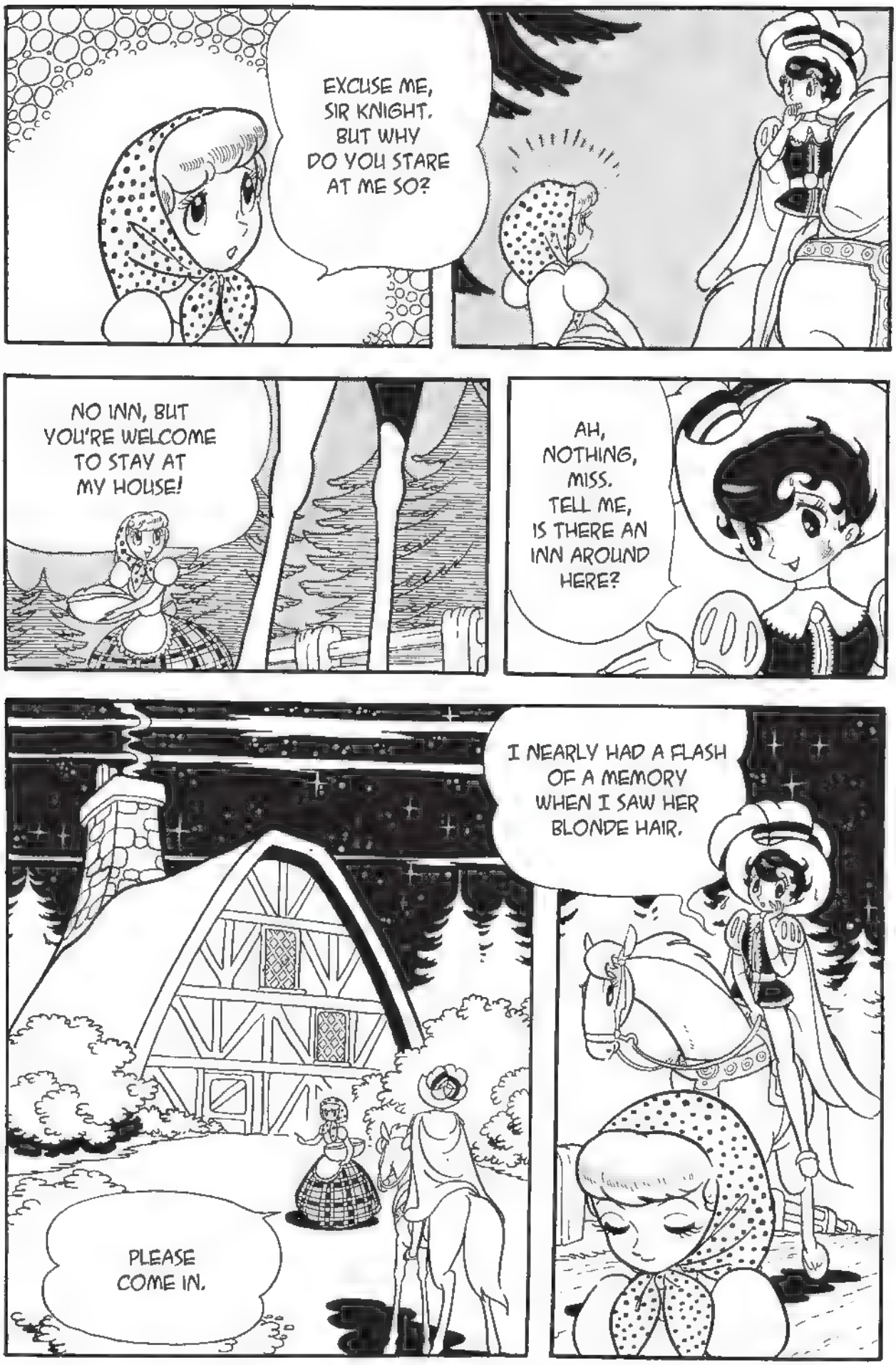
Chapter 25

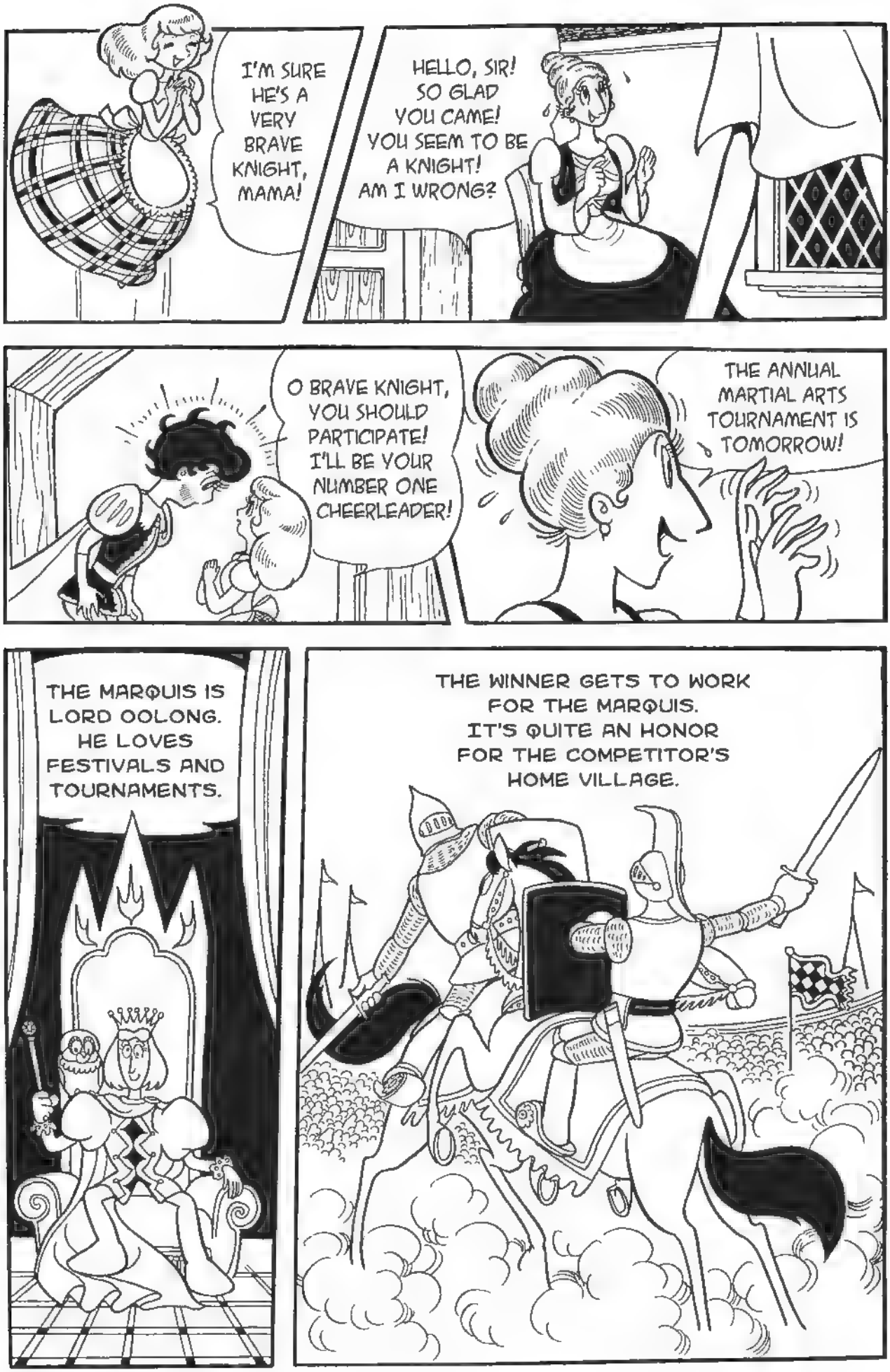
Mad Marquis Oolong

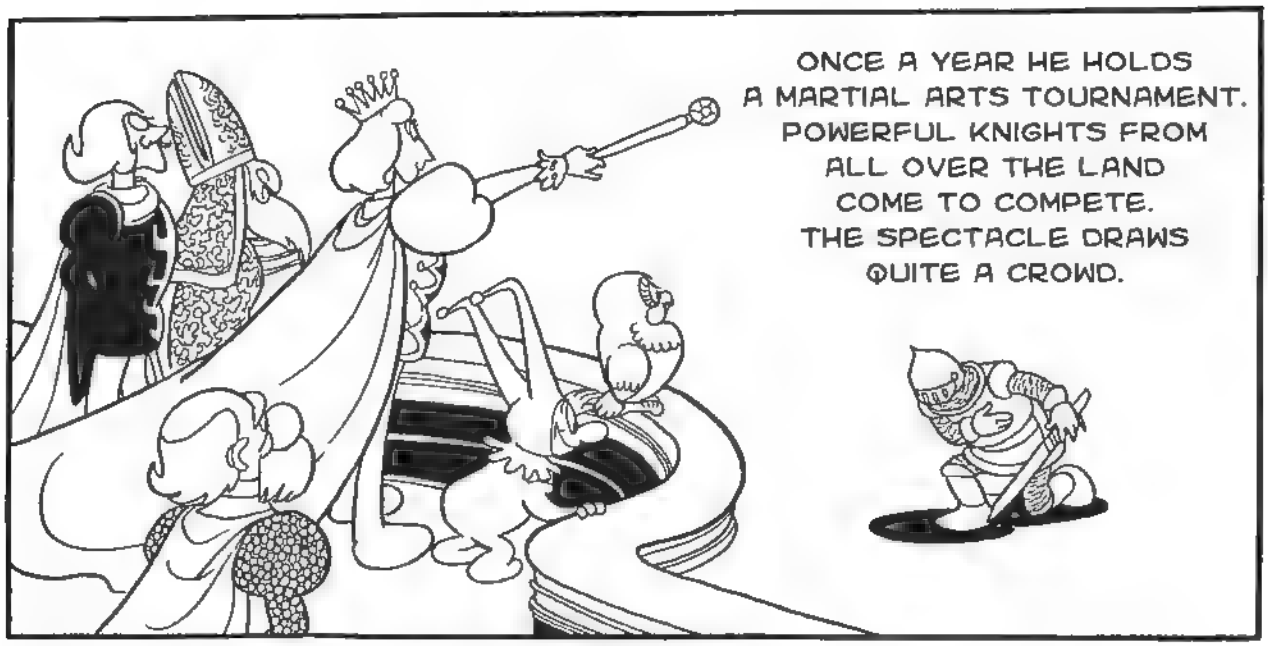
NORTH MEANS A MOUNTAIN PASS. NO MATTER.
Eastern Border
North Mtn. Pass
South Palace
West
HUH?
I G-GOTTA RUN AWAY...
OH. OH? ISN'T THAT PRINCE SAPPHIRE? I HEARD A RUMOR HE DIED! NOW HE'S COME BACK TO LIFE? RIDING AROUND ON A HORSE?
BREEE!
SHHH!

HELLO, FELLOW TRAVELLER.
EEP.
WHINNY!
QUIET! KEEP STILL!
UH, DO YOU UH, REALLY, UH, NOT RECOGNIZE ME?
IS THERE AN INN NORTH OF HERE?
HEH HEH. G-GREAT WEATHER WE'RE HAVING. ERM, IT'S BEEN A WHILE!
...REALLY DOESN'T REMEMBER ME...
NO...
ぼっかぶん

A HINT...
EVEN JUST ONE MEMORY IS FINE... I WANT TO REMEMBER SOMETHING.
WHO WAS THAT?
GASP
A GIRL WITH FLAXEN HAIR...


EXCUSE ME, SIR KNIGHT. BUT WHY DO YOU STARE AT ME SO?
NO INN, BUT YOU'RE WELCOME TO STAY AT MY HOUSE!
AH, NOTHING, MISS. TELL ME, IS THERE AN INN AROUND HERE?
I NEARLY HAD A FLASH OF A MEMORY WHEN I SAW HER BLONDE HAIR.
PLEASE COME IN.


I'M SURE HE'S A VERY BRAVE KNIGHT, MAMA!
HELLO, SIR! SO GLAD YOU CAME! YOU SEEM TO BE A KNIGHT! AM I WRONG?
O BRAVE KNIGHT, YOU SHOULD PARTICIPATE! I'LL BE YOUR NUMBER ONE CHEERLEADER!
THE ANNUAL MARTIAL ARTS TOURNAMENT IS TOMORROW!
THE MARQUIS IS LORD OOLONG. HE LOVES FESTIVALS AND TOURNAMENTS.
THE WINNER GETS TO WORK FOR THE MARQUIS. IT'S QUITE AN HONOR FOR THE COMPETITOR'S HOME VILLAGE.


ONCE A YEAR HE HOLDS A MARTIAL ARTS TOURNAMENT. POWERFUL KNIGHTS FROM ALL OVER THE LAND COME TO COMPETE. THE SPECTACLE DRAWS QUITE A CROWD.

I DON'T KNOW IF I CAN WIN.
IF YOU WIN, WILL YOU TAKE ME FOR YOUR BRIDE?

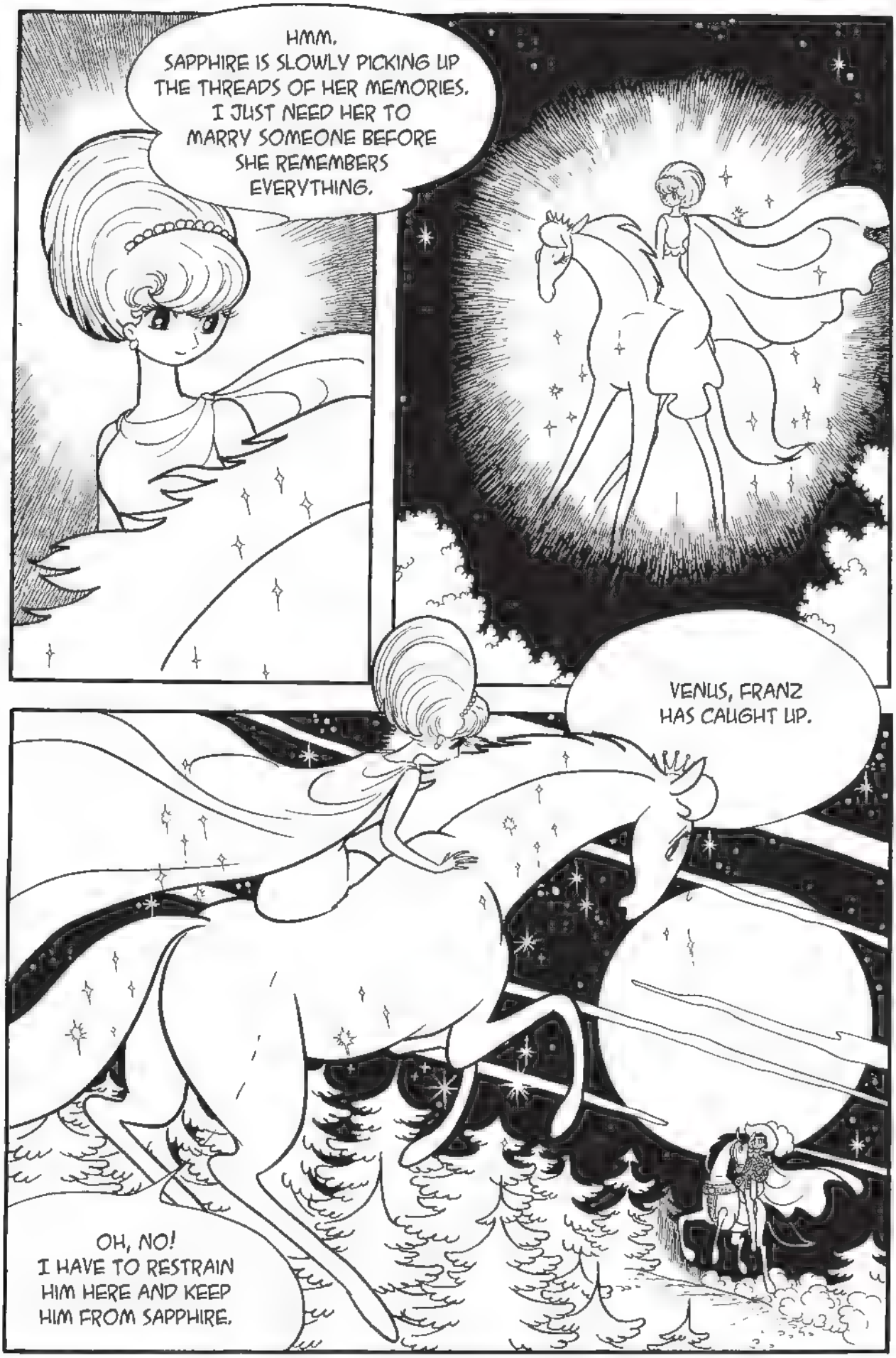
OH?
ALSO, MANY FEMALE SPECTATORS FALL IN LOVE WITH THE KNIGHTS AND TRY TO MARRY THEM.

OK, I'LL DO IT. IT'LL BE A GOOD CHANCE TO TEST MY STRENGTH.
OH, WONDER-FUL!

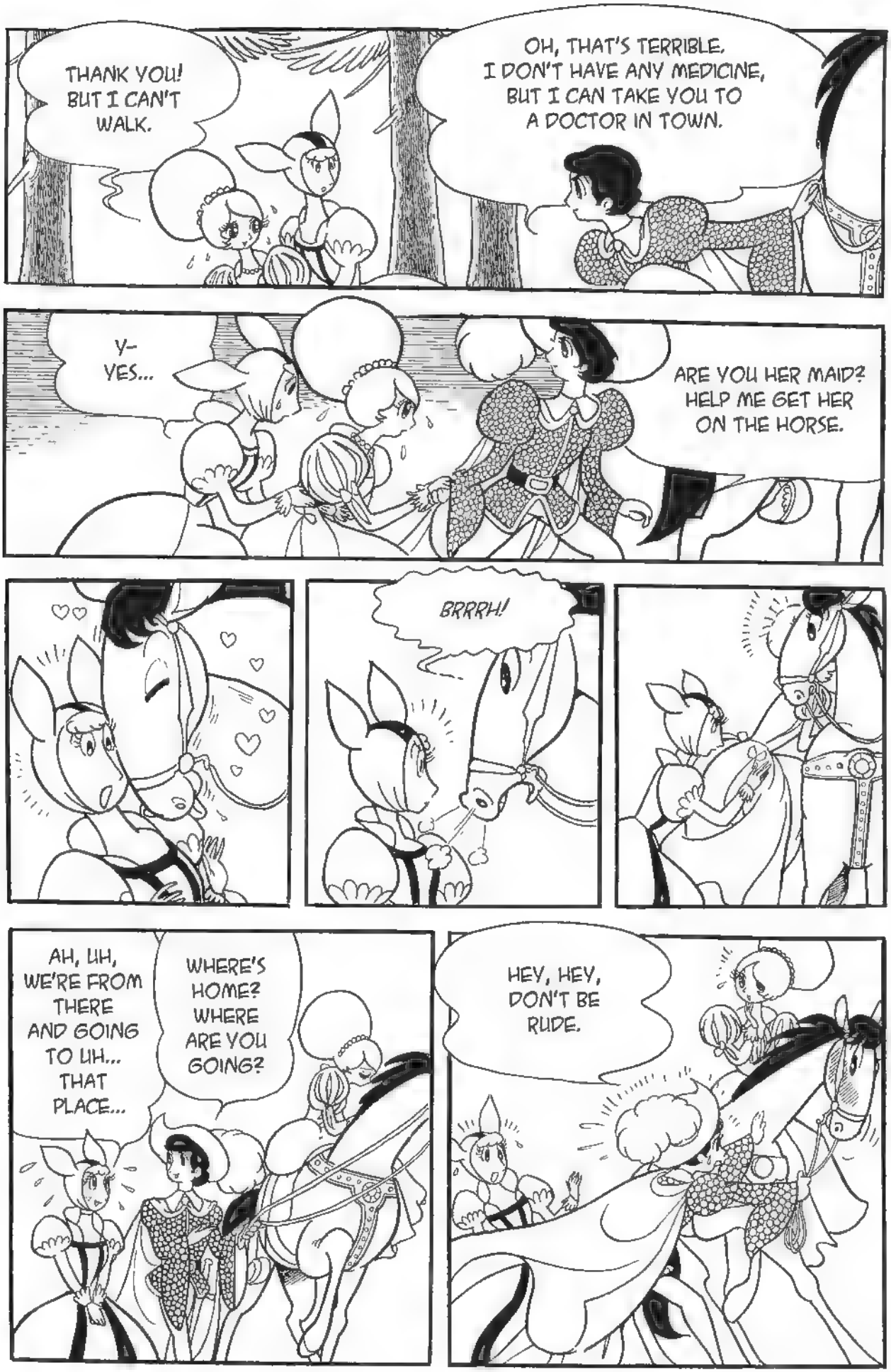
MY LOVER THAT OLD MONK MENTIONED WILL BE IN THE CROWD.
BUT PERHAPS...

FLAXEN-HAIRED MAIDEN...
FLAXEN-HAIRED...
MY HAIR'S AS BLACK AS POLISH, NOT LONG AND SOFT LIKE HERS...
AND WHY DID I SUDDENLY FEEL A JOLT WHEN I SAW HER BLONDE HAIR?
CAN I FENCE? IF SO, WHO TAUGHT ME?
AH!
THANKS.
I'VE PREPARED YOUR BEDROOM.

I ONCE WORE A FLAXEN WIG
AND FELL IN LOVE WITH SOMEONE, HIDING MY TRUE IDENTITY. BUT WHY...?
THAT'S IT!
I WORE A FANCY DRESS. I DANCED WITH HIM AND FELL IN LOVE...
THAT'S RIGHT! IT WAS THE NIGHT OF A FESTIVAL.
OH, CURSES! I FEEL LIKE IT'S RIGHT ON THE TIP OF MY TONGUE...
...
THIS MUST BE HER DRESS. LET ME TRY IT ON.

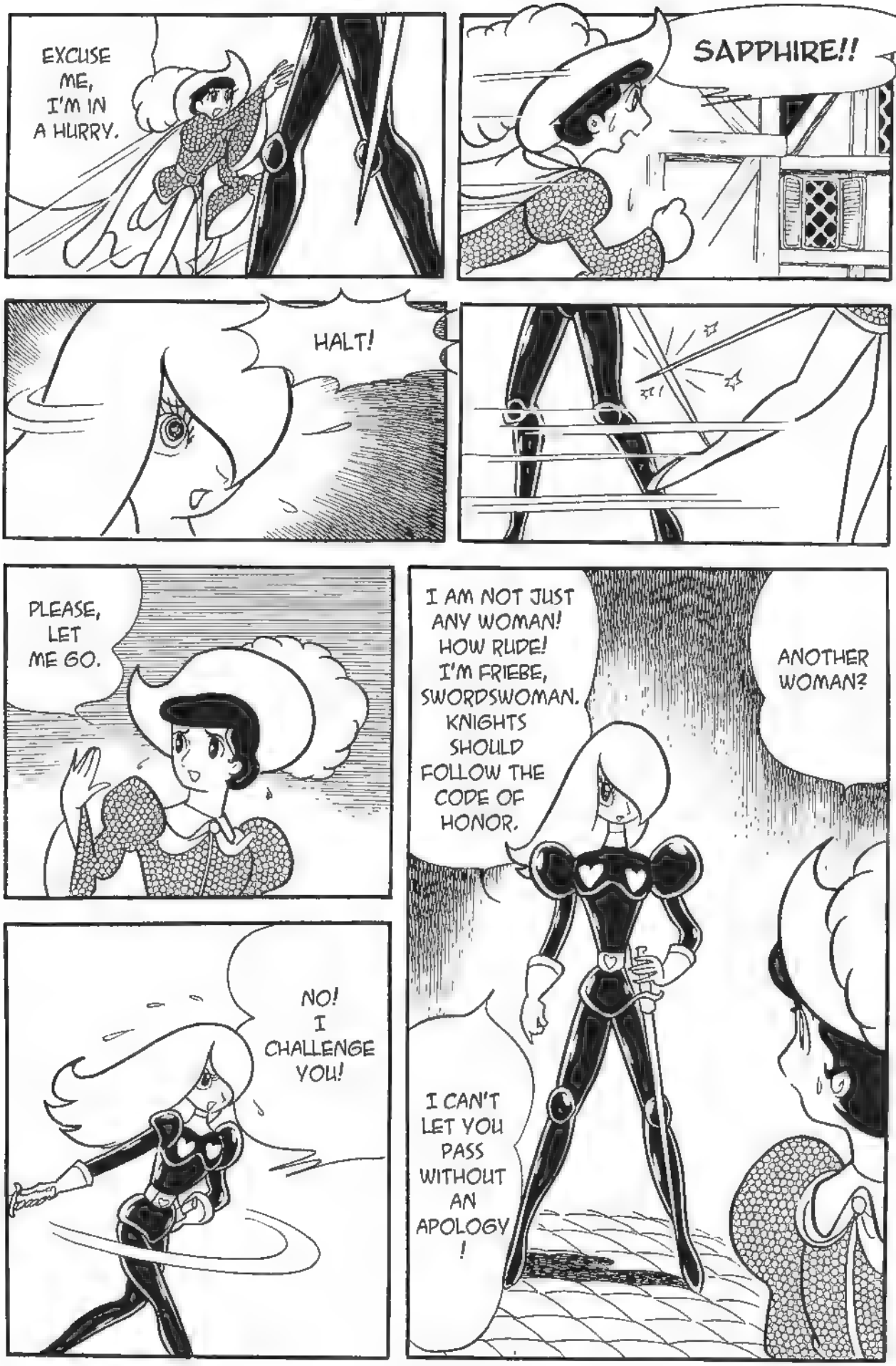

HMM.
SAPPHIRE IS SLOWLY PICKING UP THE THREADS OF HER MEMORIES.
I JUST NEED HER TO MARRY SOMEONE BEFORE SHE REMEMBERS EVERYTHING.
VENUS, FRANZ HAS CAUGHT UP.
OH, NO!
I HAVE TO RESTRAIN HIM HERE AND KEEP HIM FROM SAPPHIRE.

AND LURE HIM AWAY.
I'LL TRANS-FORM
UNH... UHH...
I WAS TRAVELING, BUT MY STOMACH SUDDENLY STARTED HURTING...
WHAT'S WRONG, FAIR LADY?

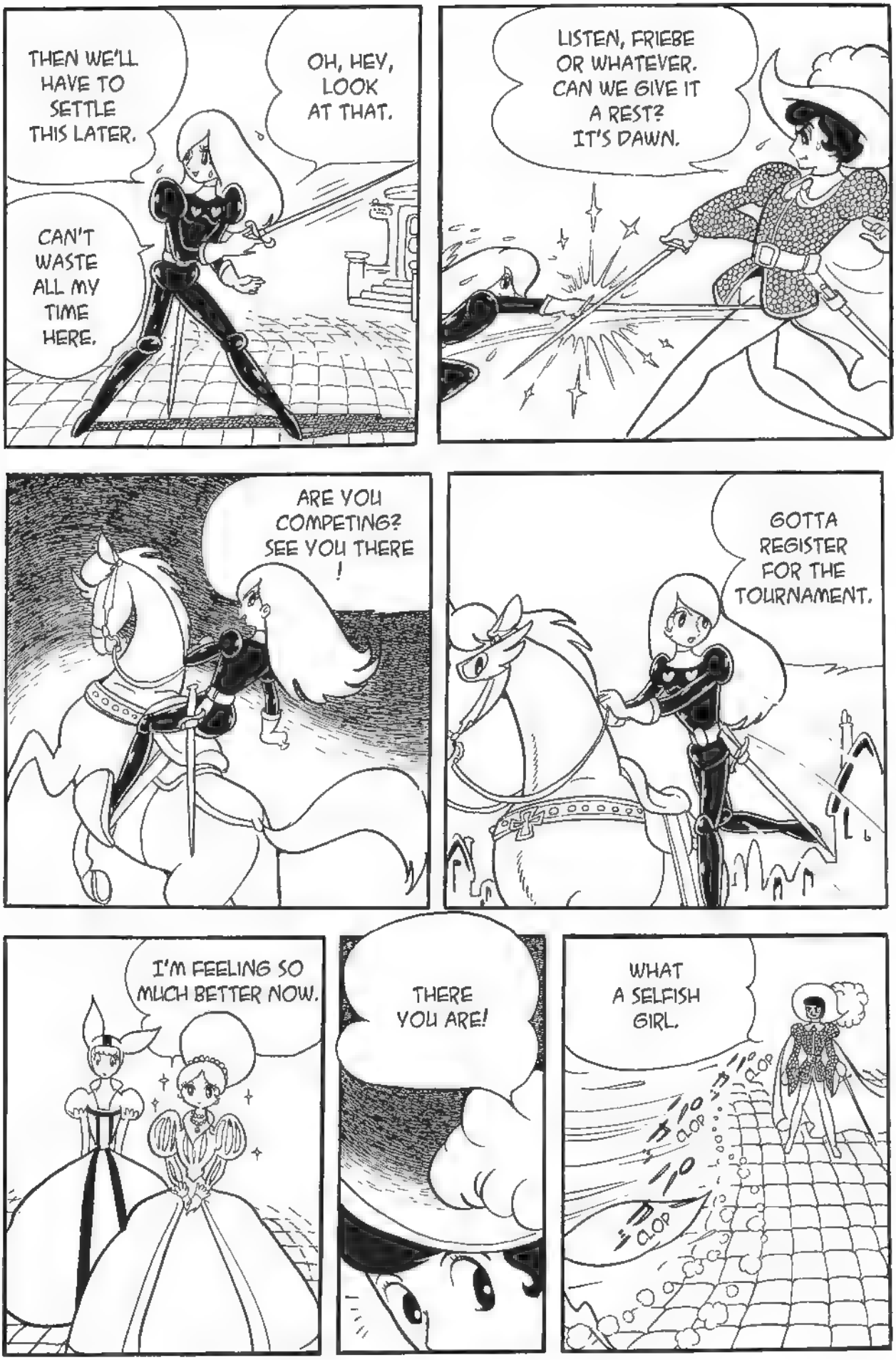

THANK YOU! BUT I CAN'T WALK.
OH, THAT'S TERRIBLE. I DON'T HAVE ANY MEDICINE, BUT I CAN TAKE YOU TO A DOCTOR IN TOWN.
V- YES...
ARE YOU HER MAID? HELP ME GET HER ON THE HORSE.
BRRRH!
AH, UH, WE'RE FROM THERE AND GOING TO UH... THAT PLACE...
WHERE'S HOME? WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
HEY, HEY, DON'T BE RUDE.

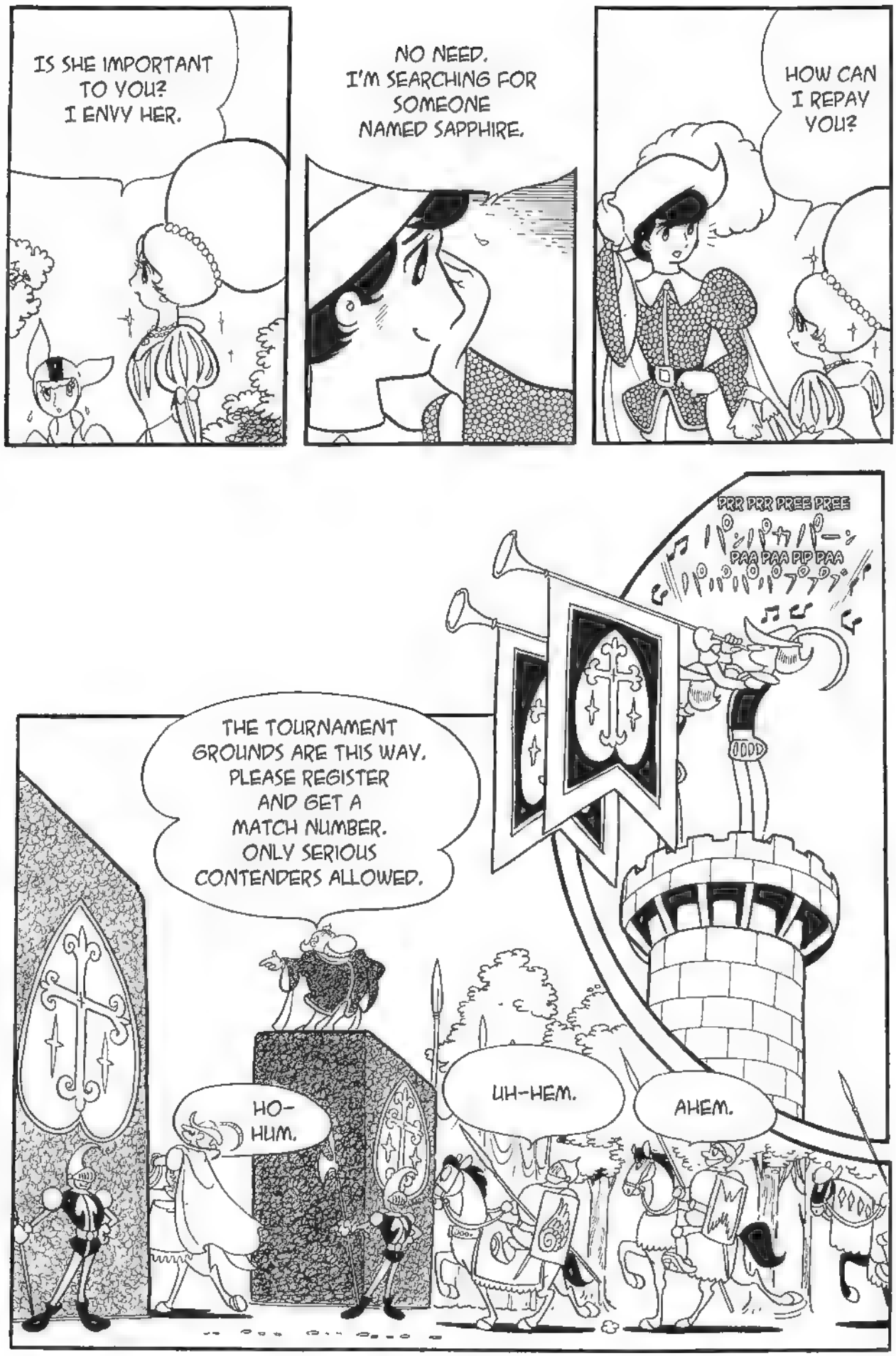
I KNOW I'VE SEEN HER SOMEWHERE ...
HOW ODD ...
ガチャ KLATTER
ガチャ KLATTER
ガチャ KLATTER
ガチャ KLATTER
WARRIORS, FENCERS, ARCHERS, MEN IN ARMOR AND ASSORTED THUGS ARE ADMITTED TO THE MARQUIS' GROUNDS. THE TOURNAMENT IS ABOUT TO BEGIN!
TODAY'S THE DAY OF THE MARTIAL ARTS TOURNAMENT.

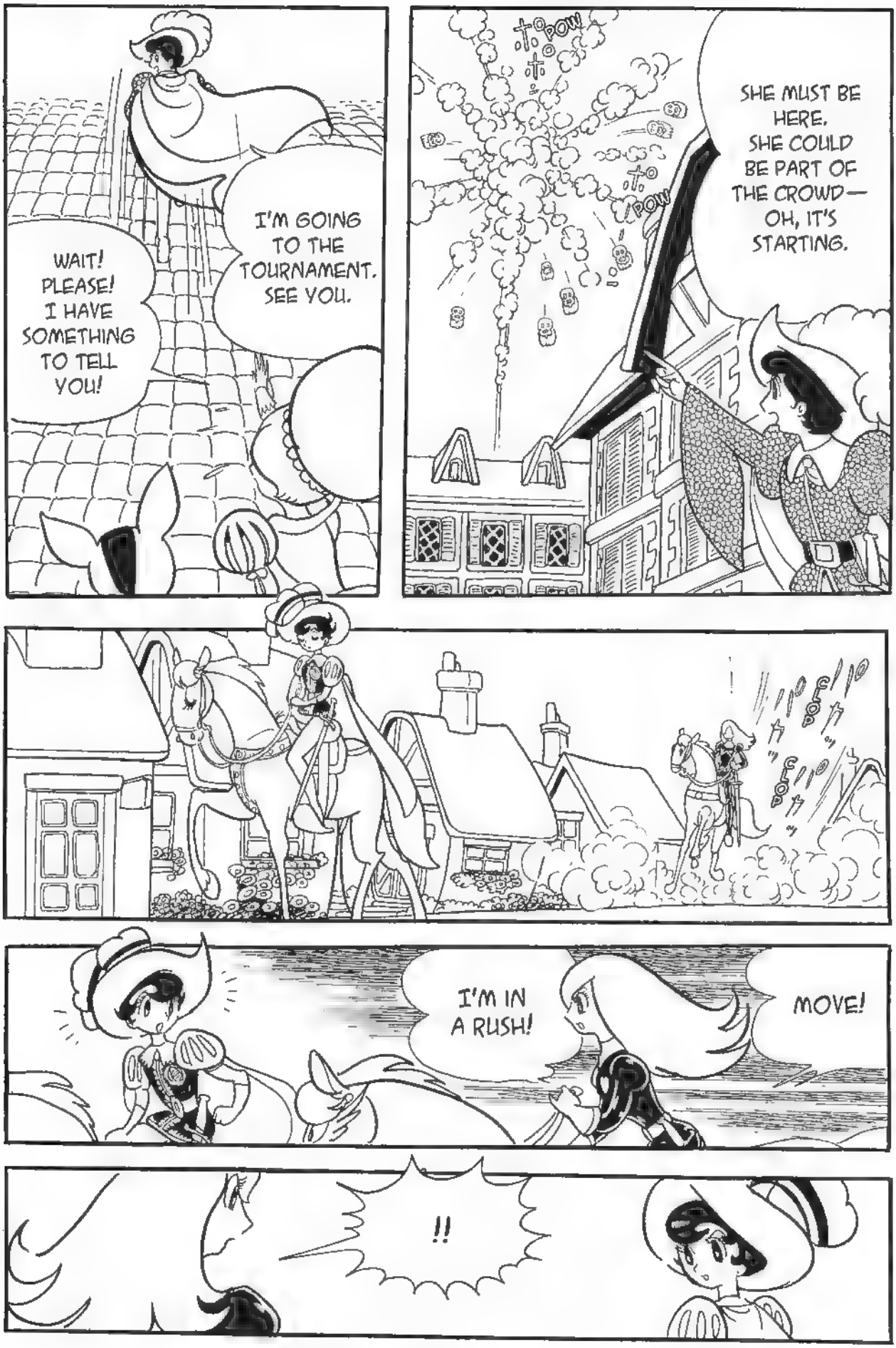
IS THERE ROOM AT THIS INN?
WE'RE FULL. THERE'S ROOM IN THE MANGER, THOUGH.
A MARTIAL ARTS TOURN-AMENT?
I'LL HAVE TO ASK ABOUT IT WHEN I GET TO AN INN.
THE TOWN IS SWARMING WITH GUESTS FOR THE BIG TOURNAMENT.
WHAT? AREN'T YOU A COMPETITOR ?
AH, A TOURN-AMENT.
I'LL GO FIND A DOCTOR.
OH... I THINK I'M ALL BETTER NOW.
THIS IS A WONDERFUL ROOM. PLEASE, STAY WITH ME.
DO AS YOU WISH. I'LL GO CHECK OUT THE TOWN.
AH!
ISN'T THAT SAPPHIRE?


EXCUSE ME, I'M IN A HURRY.
SAPPHIRE!!
HALT!
PLEASE, LET ME GO.
I AM NOT JUST ANY WOMAN! HOW RUDE! I'M FRIEBE, SWORDSWOMAN. KNIGHTS SHOULD FOLLOW THE CODE OF HONOR.
ANOTHER WOMAN?
NO! I CHALLENGE YOU!
I CAN'T LET YOU PASS WITHOUT AN APOLOGY!

RUNNING AWAY? COWARD!
SORRY, MISS, BUT I JUST DON'T HAVE THE TIME.
NOW YOU'VE GONE TOO FAR, YOU PLAY-FIGHTING TWO-BIT ACTRESS!
WHAT?!
WHAT DID YOU SAY?!
KLANG
I'LL SHOW NO MERCY!
WHAT NOW?
PUT YOUR BACKS INTO IT, YOUNG 'UNS!
THIS IS WHY THE EVE OF A TOURNA-MENT IS GREAT!
KLASH
KLANG
KLASH
KLANG

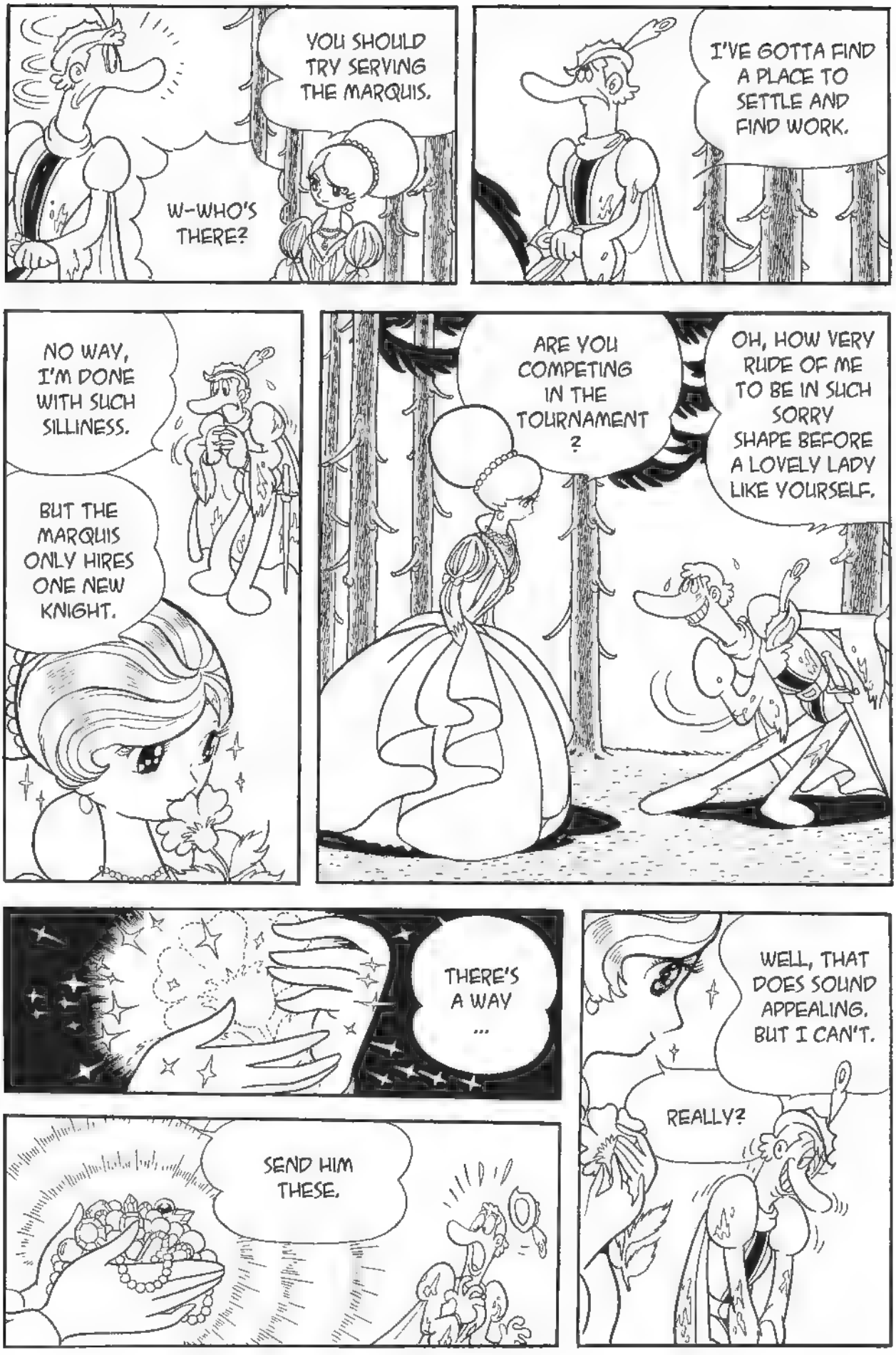

THEN WE'LL HAVE TO SETTLE THIS LATER.
OH, HEY, LOOK AT THAT.
CAN'T WASTE ALL MY TIME HERE.
LISTEN, FRIEBE OR WHATEVER. CAN WE GIVE IT A REST? IT'S DAWN.
ARE YOU COMPETING? SEE YOU THERE!
GOTTA REGISTER FOR THE TOURNAMENT.
I'M FEELING SO MUCH BETTER NOW.
THERE YOU ARE!
WHAT A SELFISH GIRL.
DOP
DOP
DOP


IS SHE IMPORTANT TO YOU? I ENVY HER.
NO NEED. I'M SEARCHING FOR SOMEONE NAMED SAPPHIRE.
HOW CAN I REPAY YOU?
PRR PRR PREE PREE
PAA PAA PIP PAA
THE TOURNAMENT GROUNDS ARE THIS WAY. PLEASE REGISTER AND GET A MATCH NUMBER. ONLY SERIOUS CONTENDERS ALLOWED.
HO-HUM.
UH-HEM.
AHEM.


I'M GOING TO THE TOURNAMENT. SEE YOU.
WAIT! PLEASE! I HAVE SOMETHING TO TELL YOU!
POW!
POW!
SHE MUST BE HERE. SHE COULD BE PART OF THE CROWD— OH, IT'S STARTING.
I'M IN A RUSH!
MOVE!
!!

DO YOU KNOW WHY I'M COMPETING? I WANT TO FIND A HUSBAND AMONG ALL THOSE WARRIORS.
YES.
ARE YOU COMPE-TING?
NICE TO MEET YOU.
I'M FRIEBE. NICE TO MEET YOU.
HO HO HO! HA HA HA!
SOMEONE CHARMING AND DASHING... LIKE YOURSELF!
THE TOURNAMENT IS STARTING!
ALL COMPETITORS PLEASE HEAD TO THE GROUNDS.

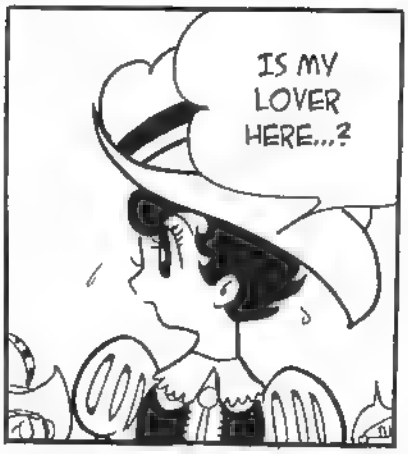
HE MIGHT MAKE HER REMEMBER EVERYTHING!
I ABSOLUTELY CANNOT LET FRANZ FIND SAPPHIRE!
I KNOW! I'LL MAKE HER A PRISONER OF THIS COUNTRY!
WELL, THIS HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH ME.
HE'LL EMPLOY THE SOLE WINNER AS PART OF HIS RETINUE.
TOURNAMENT
SO MARQUIS OOLONG IS THE ONE HOSTING THE TOURNAMENT?
TOURNAMENT


YOU SHOULD TRY SERVING THE MARQUIS.
W-WHO'S THERE?
I'VE GOTTA FIND A PLACE TO SETTLE AND FIND WORK.
NO WAY, I'M DONE WITH SUCH SILLINESS.
BUT THE MARQUIS ONLY HIRES ONE NEW KNIGHT.
ARE YOU COMPETING IN THE TOURNAMENT?
OH, HOW VERY RUDE OF ME TO BE IN SUCH SORRY SHAPE BEFORE A LOVELY LADY LIKE YOURSELF.
THERE'S A WAY ...
SEND HIM THESE.
WELL, THAT DOES SOUND APPEALING. BUT I CAN'T.
REALLY?

I HAVE PLENTY. BRIBE OOLONG INTO HIRING YOU WITH THOSE.
I-I JUST CAN'T BELIEVE A TOTAL STRANGER WOULD GIVE ME SUCH JEWELS!
MY, AREN'T YOU FAINT-HEARTED!
G-GEMS?! OOH.... UPF.
IS IT A MAN? WOMAN? WHO'S HE TO YOU?
OF COURSE! I'LL DO WHATEVER YOU ASK.
WITH SO MUCH, THAT SHOULD BE EASY!
IN EXCHANGE, I WANT YOU TO ASK THE MARQUIS TO THROW SOMEONE IN PRISON.
SA... SAPPHIRE?
A KNIGHT NAMED ... SAPPHIRE.

YAH! HIP HIP! HOORAY! HOORAY! HAPPY HAPPY FROM A TO ZIPPY!
PRESENTING THE SPONSOR OF BRAVE KNIGHTS, GREAT LORD MARQUIS OOLONG!
GET READY TO HUSTLE!
I BE THE OOLONG, I BE.

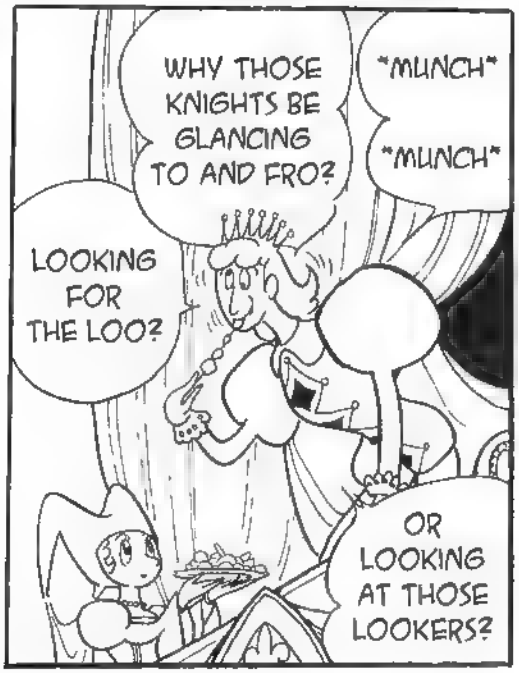
THERE'S SAPPHIRE. I'LL GET YOU.


IS MY LOVER HERE...?

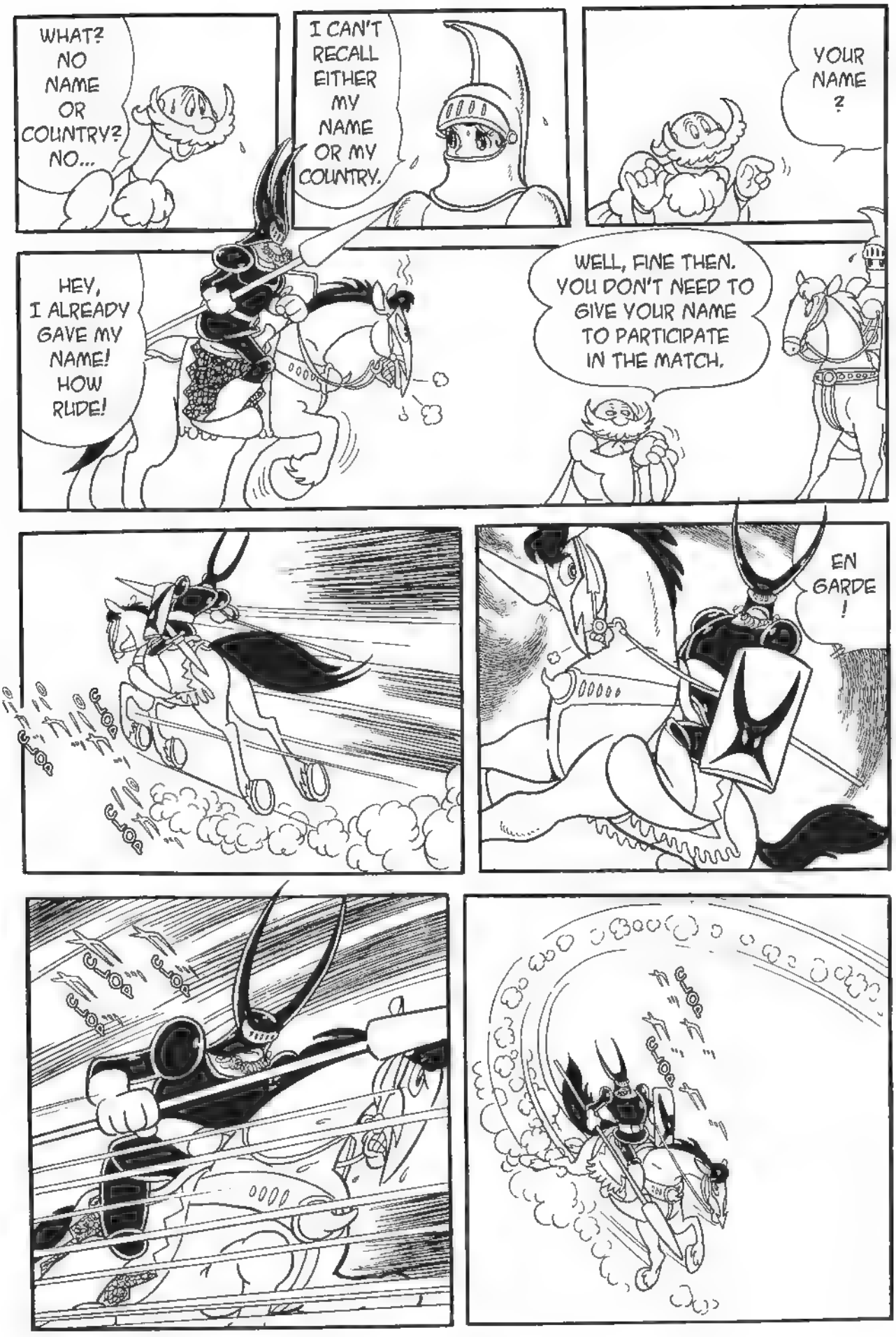
I WONDER IF SAPPHIRE'S HERE...

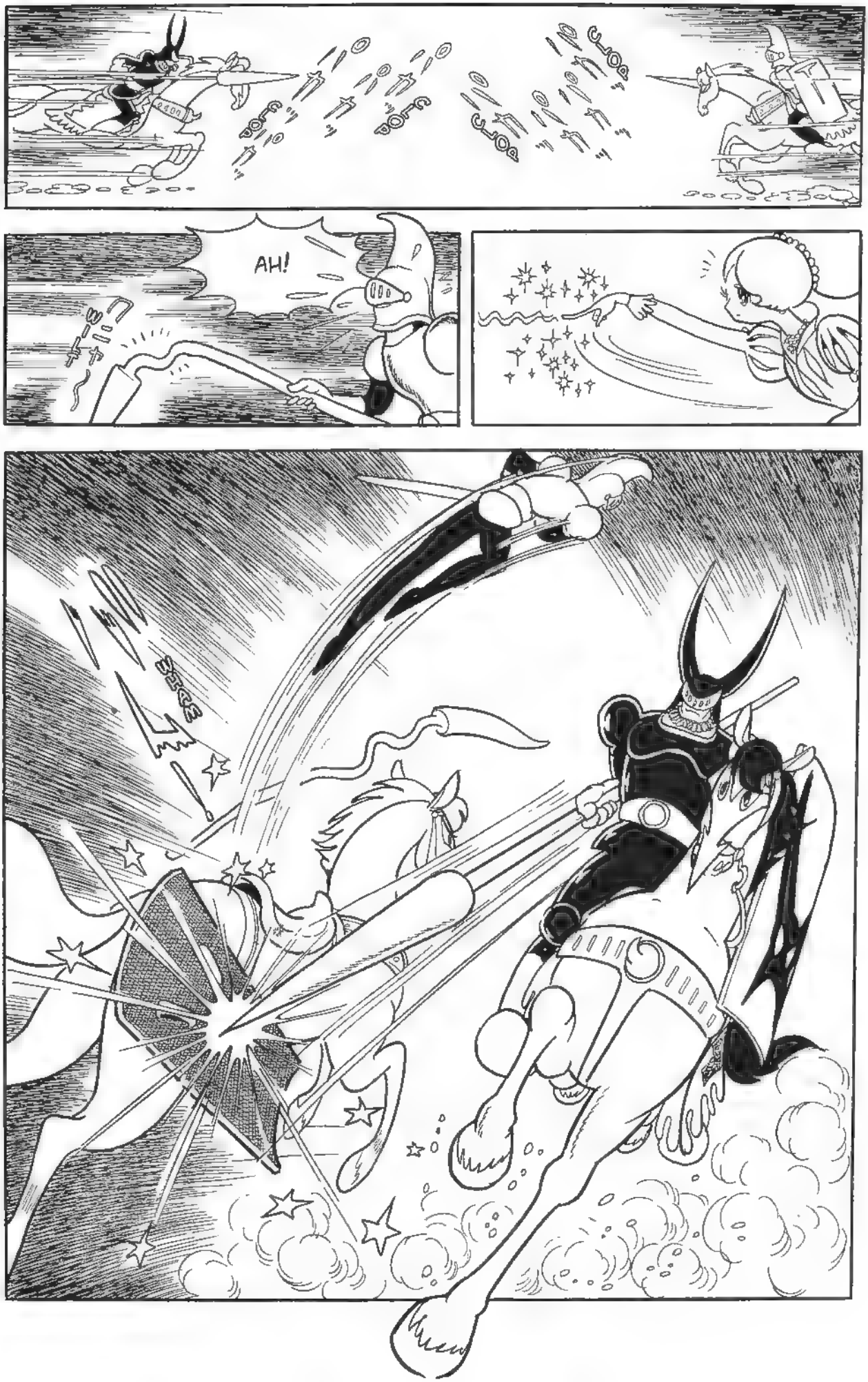
HO HO! SO MANY PRETTY LADIES!

ALL COMPETITORS LEAVE THE GROUNDS! MATCHES WILL GO IN ORDER!


WHY THOSE KNIGHTS BE GLANCING TO AND FRO?
"MUNCH"
"MUNCH"
LOOKING FOR THE LOO?
OR LOOKING AT THOSE LOOKERS?

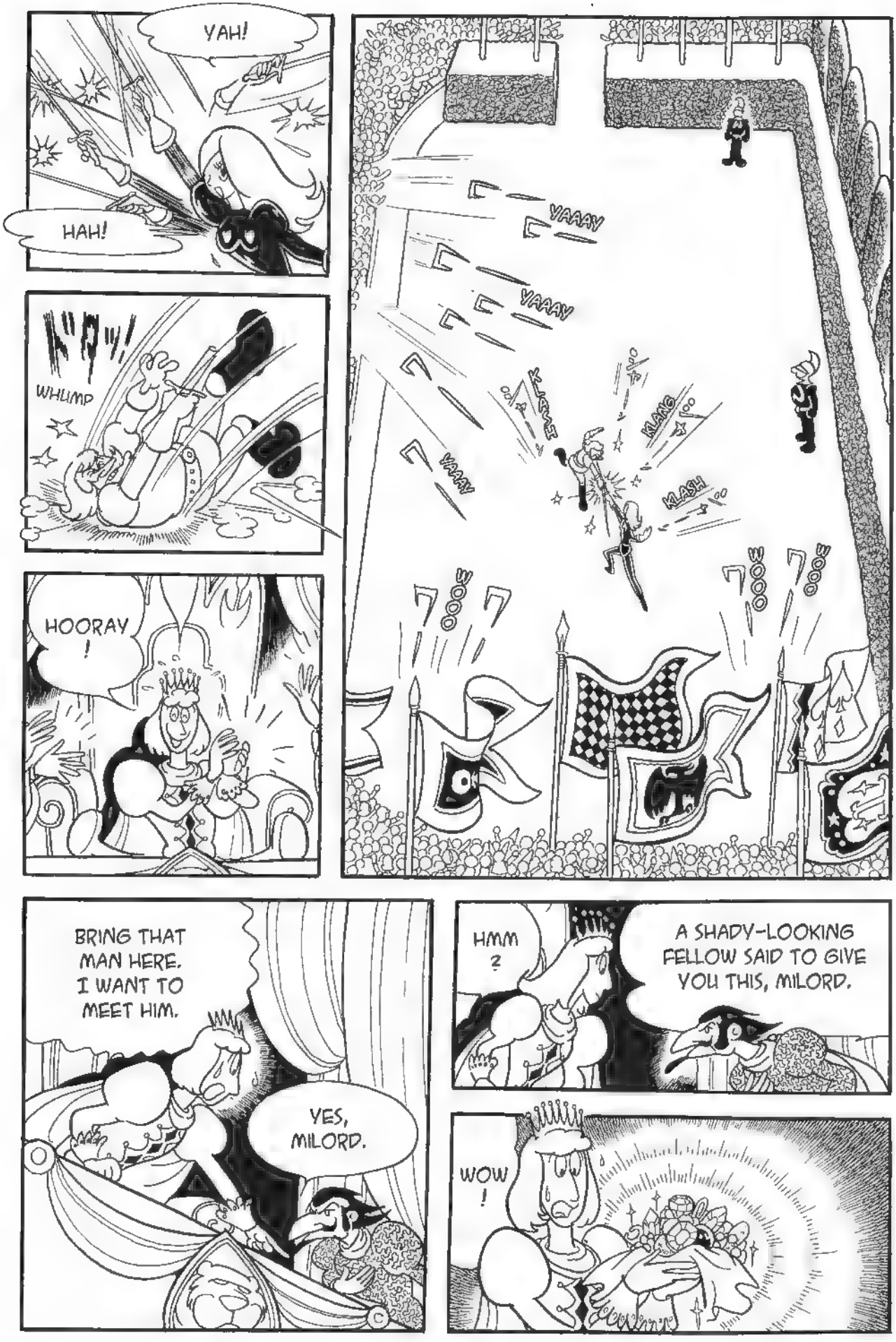
YES, SO, BECAUSE IF YOU LOSE, IT'D BE SHAMEFUL. SO, YOU'D LOOK BAD, SO THIS WAY YOUR PARTNER CAN'T SEE YOU.
WHY DO I NEED A HELMET ?
SUCK
PAA PAA PREE
WELL, HERE I AM.
WOOO HOOO
YAAN
YAAN


WHAT? NO NAME OR COUNTRY? NO...
I CAN'T RECALL EITHER MY NAME OR MY COUNTRY.
YOUR NAME ?
HEY, I ALREADY GAVE MY NAME! HOW RUDE!
WELL, FINE THEN. YOU DON'T NEED TO GIVE YOUR NAME TO PARTICIPATE IN THE MATCH.
EN GARDE !


AH!

DASH
GRAB
KLANG
THUD
SWISH
YOU CAN'T INTRUDE ON A MATCH!
S-SAPPHIRE!!

KLANG
KLANG
WHOA, HE'S SO FAST I'M GETTING DIZZY!
KLANG
WHEW...
THE WINNER IS ENTRY #18, THE NAMELESS KNIGHT!
EXCELLENT WORK. VERY WELL DONE.
DAMN! I BENT HER SPEAR AND YET SHE STILL WON! CURSES!
I'M UP NEXT. PLEASE WATCH MY HANDIWORK.
SURE.

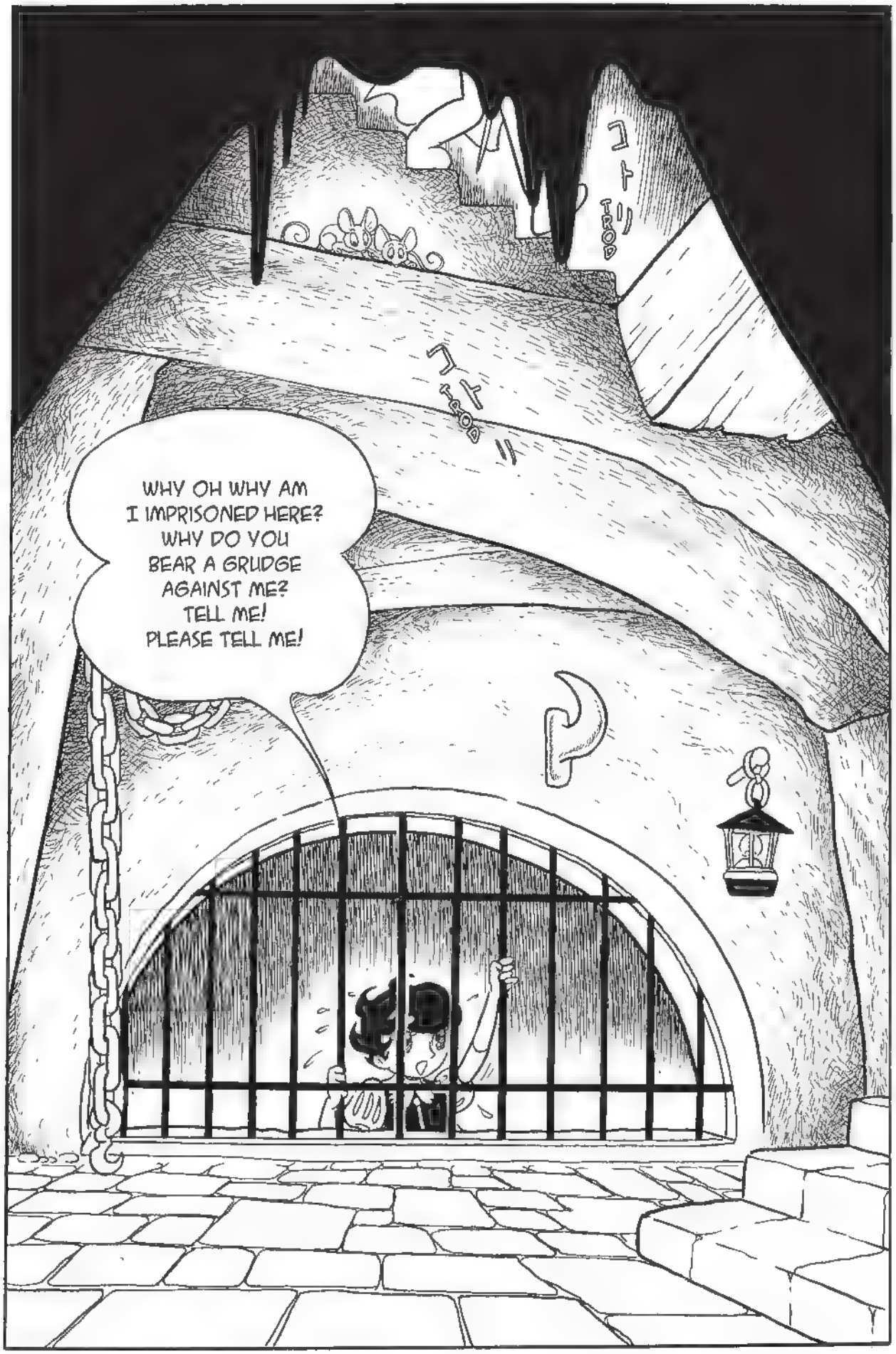

YAH!
HAH!
WHUMP
YAAAY
YAAAY
YAAAY
KLANG!
KLANG
KLASH
HOORAY!
BRING THAT MAN HERE. I WANT TO MEET HIM.
YES, MILORD.
HMM?
A SHADY-LOOKING FELLOW SAID TO GIVE YOU THIS, MILORD.
WOW!

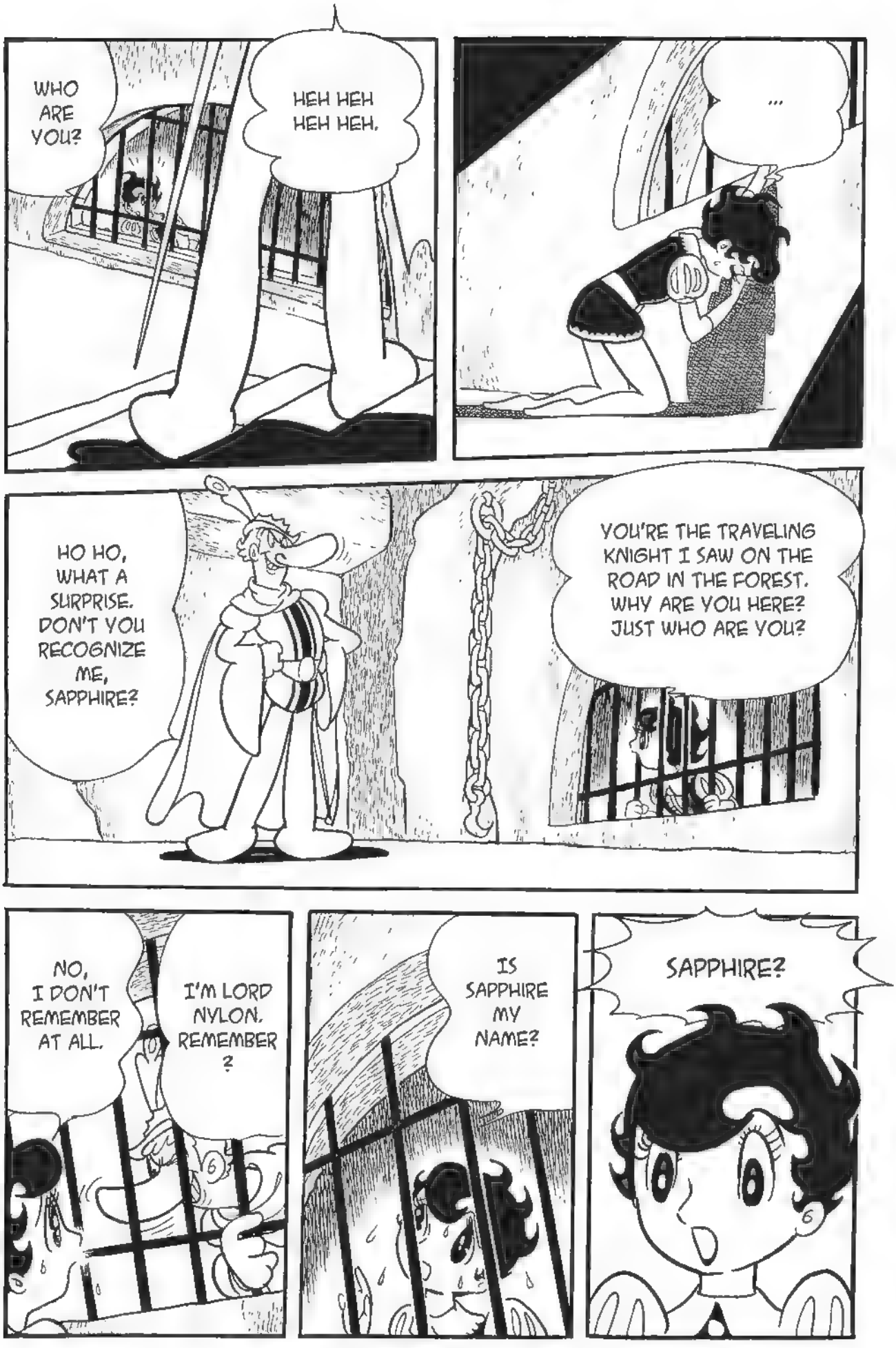
N-NOT SO, MY LORD !
YOU LOOK SO SHABBY, YET HAVE SUCH JEWELS. HOW VERY SUSPICIOUS ...
WHAT'S YOUR REQUEST ?
HEH HEH.
HERE HE IS.
YOU'RE GREEDY. WELL, WHAT'S YOUR WISH?
I HAVE ONE MORE FAVOR TO ASK.
IF YOU GIVE ME SUCH JEWELS, I HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO GRANT YOUR REQUEST.
I FIGURED.
I SIMPLY WISH TO BE IN YOUR EMPLOY.
SWORDSMAN NUMBER 18, COME WITH US.
WHAT?!
I'D LIKE YOU TO THROW ONE OF THOSE COMPETITIORS INTO JAIL.

WHAT HAVE I DONE WRONG?
ORDERS FROM THE MARQUIS.
LET ME GO! YOU DECEIVED ME!
HEY! HOW INSOLENT!
GRAB HER!
WE'VE ORDERS FROM THE MARQUIS TO THROW YOU INTO THIS DUNGEON. HAVE YOURSELF A GOOD CRY.

Chapter 26

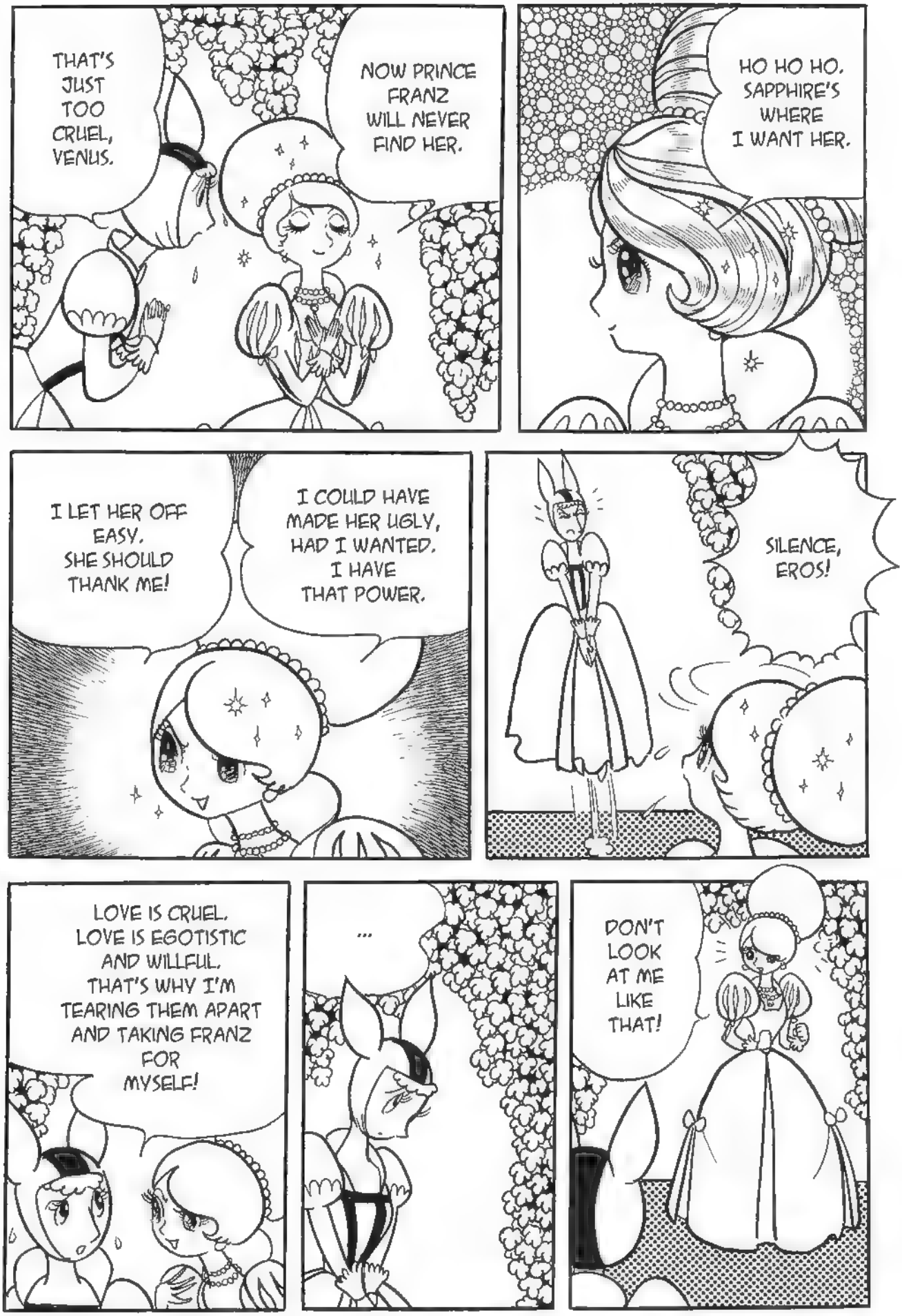
Friebe, Swordswoman

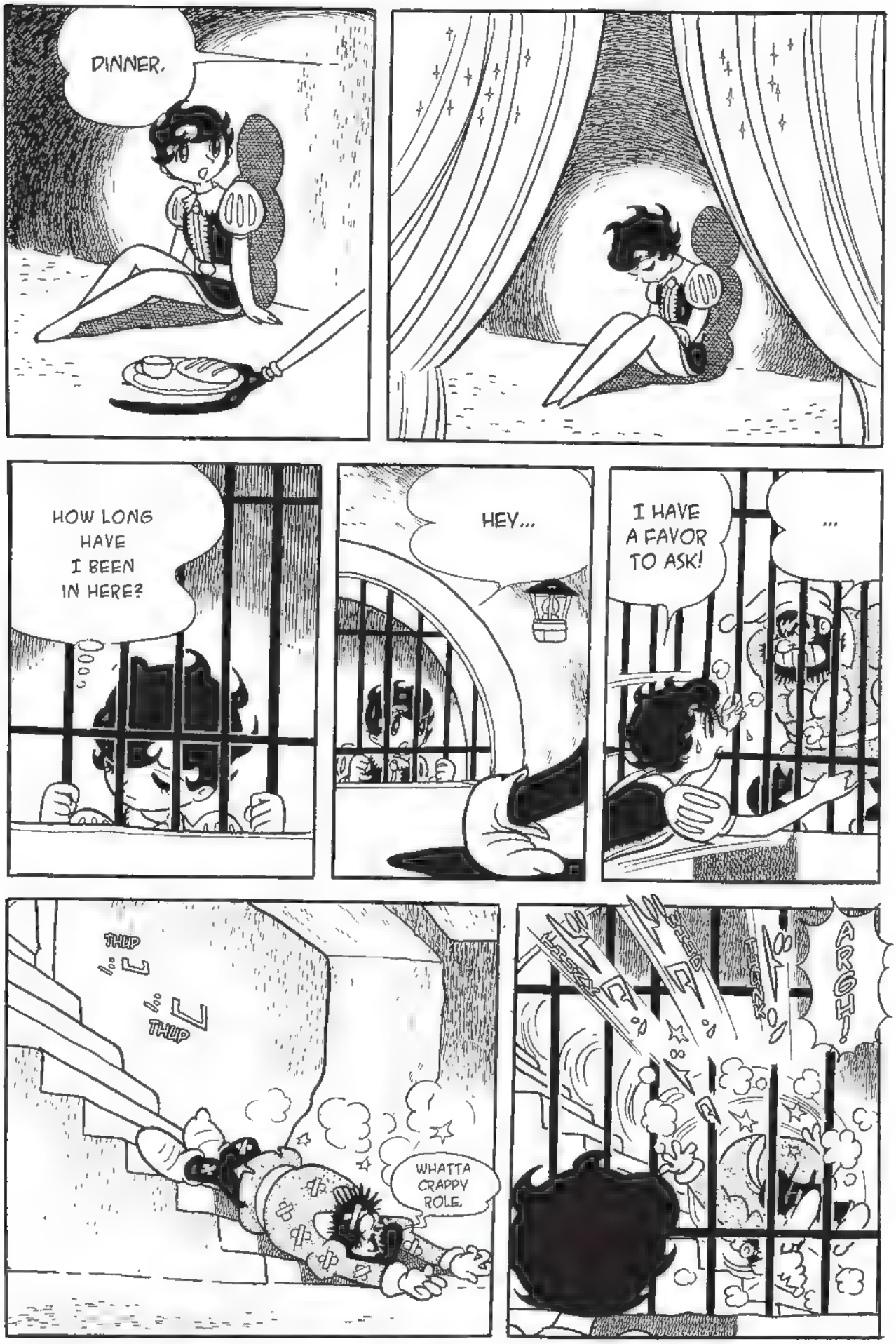

WHY OH WHY AM I IMPRISONED HERE? WHY DO YOU BEAR A GRUDGE AGAINST ME? TELL ME! PLEASE TELL ME!

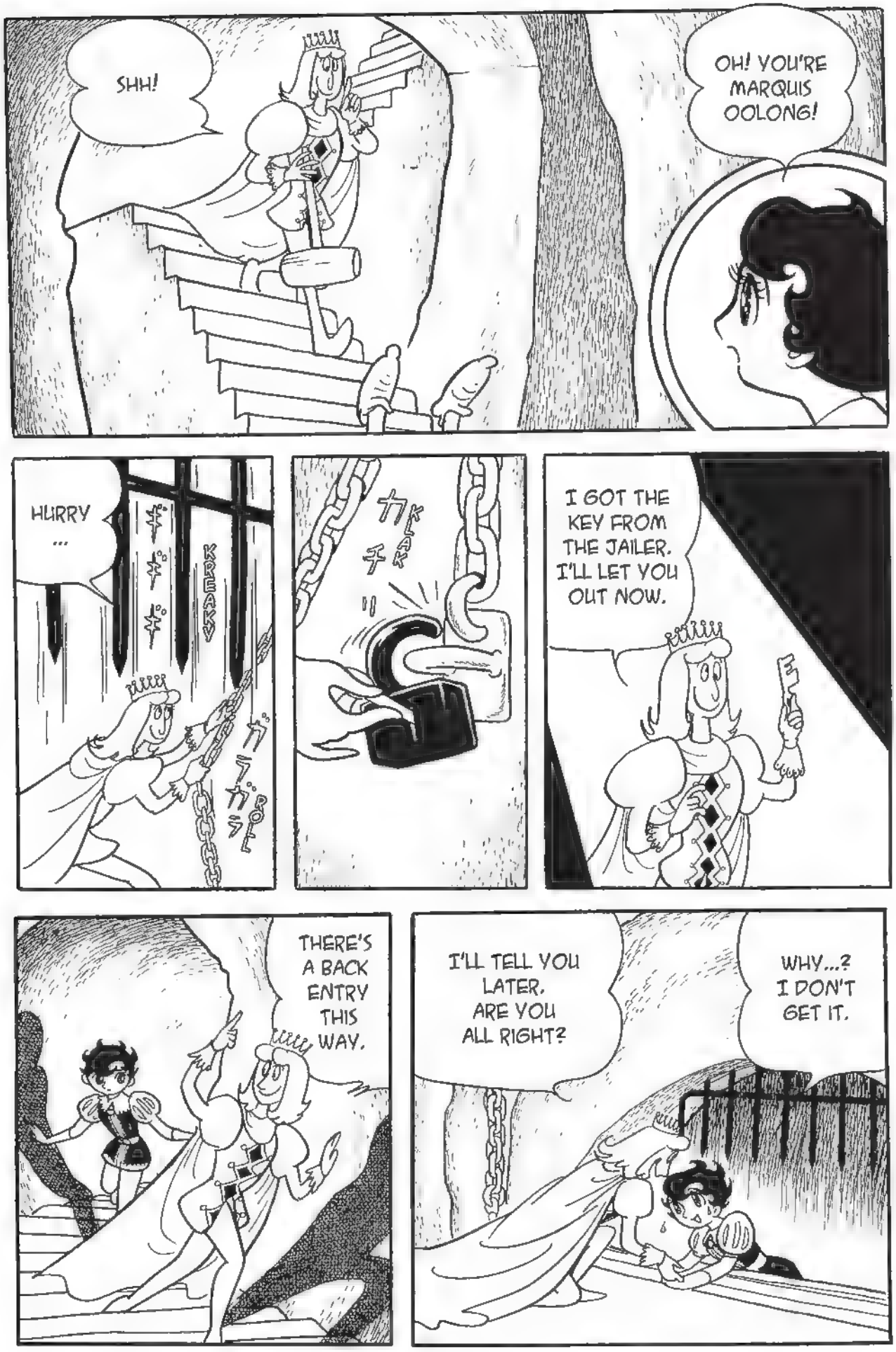

WHO ARE YOU?
HEH HEH HEH HEH.
...
HO HO, WHAT A SURPRISE. DON'T YOU RECOGNIZE ME, SAPPHIRE?
YOU'RE THE TRAVELING KNIGHT I SAW ON THE ROAD IN THE FOREST. WHY ARE YOU HERE? JUST WHO ARE YOU?
NO, I DON'T REMEMBER AT ALL.
I'M LORD NYLON. REMEMBER?
IS SAPPHIRE MY NAME?
SAPPHIRE?

WOW, YOU REALLY DON'T GET IT. POOR THING.
KILL ME? WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
HEH HEH, THEN ALLOW ME TO EXPLAIN. YOU ARE THE PRINCE— OR RATHER, THE PRINCESS— OF SILVERLAND. I WAS SUPPOSED TO KILL YOU. I RESENT YOU.
I'M GOING TO TALK MARQUIS OOLONG INTO ASSAULTING YOUR COUNTRY. WHAT DO YOU THINK? AWESOME, RIGHT?
YOUR BELOVED MOTHER, YOUR SERVANTS, EVERYONE! I'LL IMPRISON THEM ALL AND MAKE MYSELF KING!
ATTACKING MY COUNTRY? MY COUNTRY... WHO LIVES THERE?

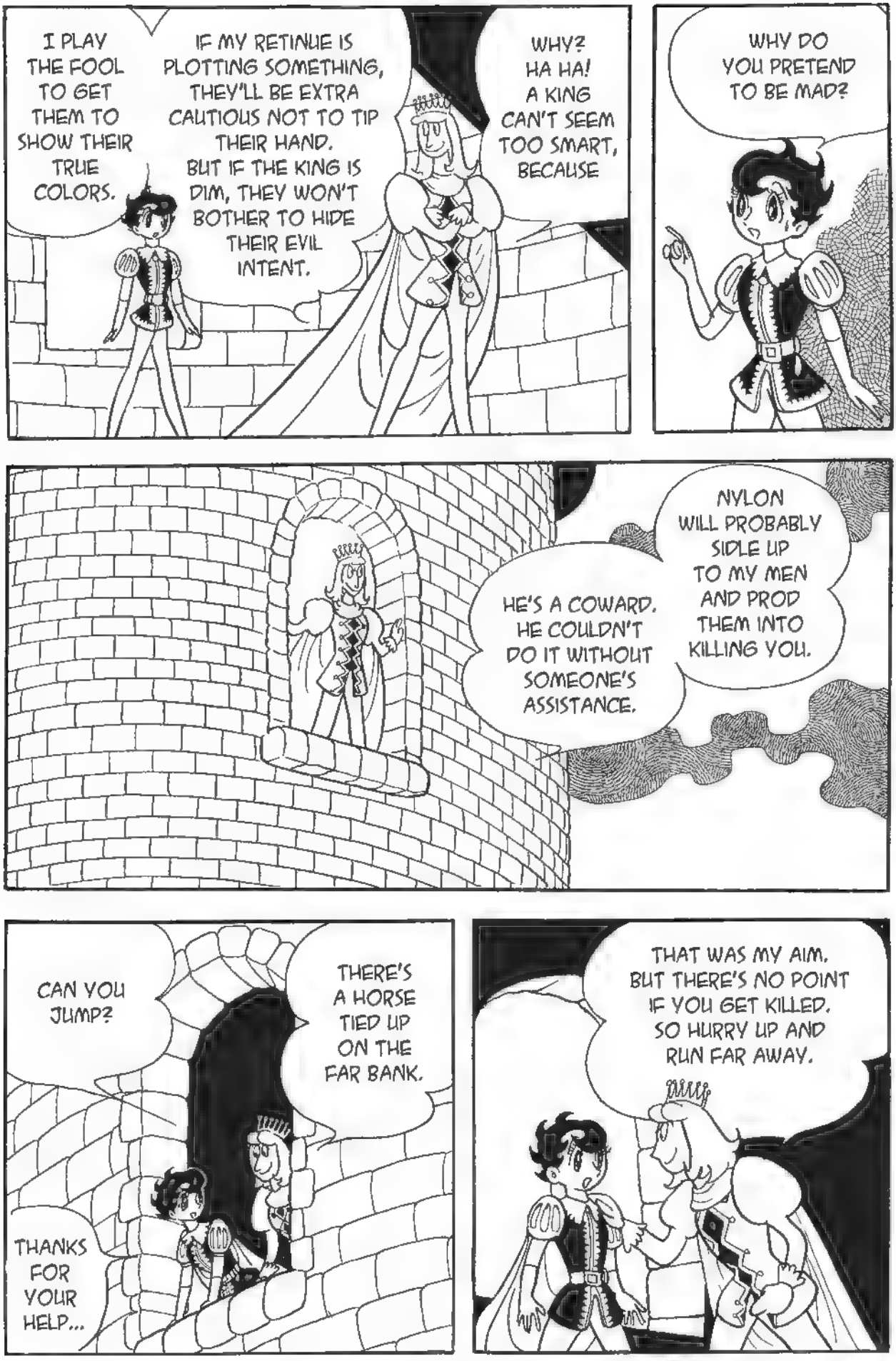
AREN'T YOU ASSERTIVE! GO AHEAD, KEEP CRYING! HA HA HA!
NYLON, WAS IT? IF WHAT YOU SAY IS TRUE, YOU'RE A VILLAIN! I WON'T LET YOU GET AWAY WITH IT!
MY NAME IS SAPPHIRE ?
SAPPHIRE
WHO DEALT ME THIS CRUEL FATE?
I CAN'T REMEMBER. I JUST CAN'T REMEMBER!
I'M THE PRINCE OF SILVERLAND ? ME?
SNIFF

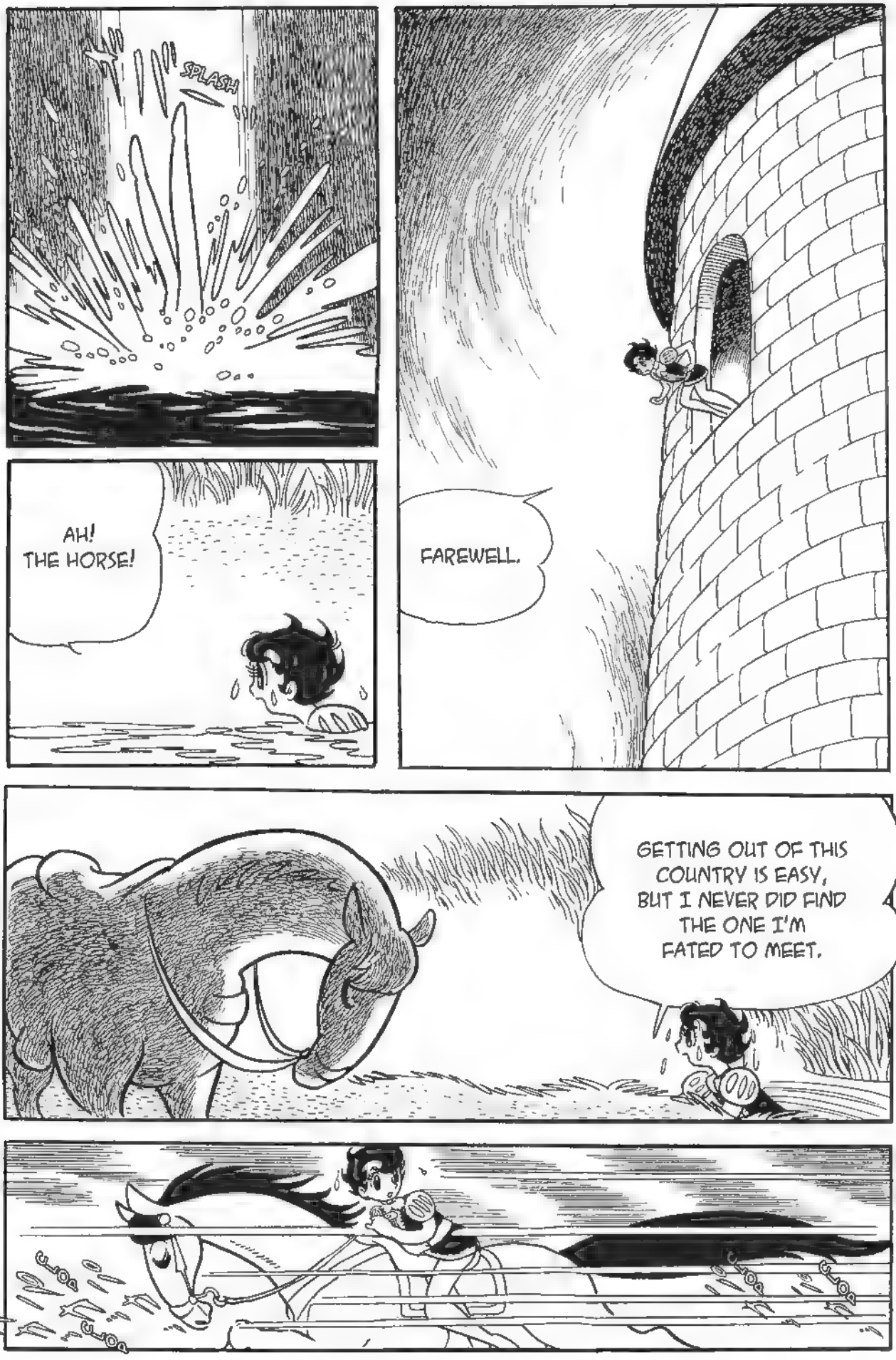

THAT'S JUST TOO CRUEL, VENUS.
NOW PRINCE FRANZ WILL NEVER FIND HER.
HO HO HO. SAPPHIRE'S WHERE I WANT HER.
I LET HER OFF EASY. SHE SHOULD THANK ME!
I COULD HAVE MADE HER UGLY, HAD I WANTED. I HAVE THAT POWER.
SILENCE, EROS!
LOVE IS CRUEL. LOVE IS EGOTISTIC AND WILLFUL. THAT'S WHY I'M TEARING THEM APART AND TAKING FRANZ FOR MYSELF!
...
DON'T LOOK AT ME LIKE THAT!


DINNER.
HOW LONG HAVE I BEEN IN HERE?
HEY...
I HAVE A FAVOR TO ASK!
...
THUP
THUP
WHATTA CRAPPY ROLE.
SHOO
ARGH!


SHH!
OH! YOU'RE MARQUIS OOLONG!
HURRY ...
KRRRAK
カチャ
I GOT THE KEY FROM THE JAILER. I'LL LET YOU OUT NOW.
THERE'S A BACK ENTRY THIS WAY.
I'LL TELL YOU LATER. ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
WHY...? I DON'T GET IT.

SILVERLAND? DO YOU KNOW WHO I AM?
ESCAPE? TO WHERE?
TO SILVERLAND, YOUR COUNTRY.
DIVE INTO THE MOAT AND ESCAPE. THERE'S A HORSE FOR YOU ON THE OTHER BANK.
WHAT?!
I MADE HIM GO SEE YOU. HE NEVER REALIZED THAT I SNUCK IN TO LISTEN, SO HE SPILLED THE BEANS.
AND ASKED TO HAVE YOU THROWN IN JAIL. I THOUGHT HE WAS SUSPICIOUS, SO I DID IT TO SEE WHAT HE WAS UP TO.
I EAVESDROPPED ON YOUR LITTLE TALK WITH SIR NYLON. HE APPROACHED ME OUT OF NOWHERE
CAN YOU MAKE THIS FACE? IT'S HARDER THAN IT LOOKS!
B-BUT I THOUGHT YOU WERE A TOTALLY CRAZY RULER. SORRY, THAT'S RUDE...
HA HA HA! I ONLY PRETEND TO BE NUTS!


I PLAY THE FOOL TO GET THEM TO SHOW THEIR TRUE COLORS.
IF MY RETINUE IS PLOTTING SOMETHING, THEY'LL BE EXTRA CAUTIOUS NOT TO TIP THEIR HAND. BUT IF THE KING IS DIM, THEY WON'T BOTHER TO HIDE THEIR EVIL INTENT.
WHY? HA HA! A KING CAN'T SEEM TOO SMART, BECAUSE
WHY DO YOU PRETEND TO BE MAD?
NYLON WILL PROBABLY SIDLE UP TO MY MEN AND PROD THEM INTO KILLING YOU.
HE'S A COWARD. HE COULDN'T DO IT WITHOUT SOMEONE'S ASSISTANCE.
CAN YOU JUMP?
THERE'S A HORSE TIED UP ON THE FAR BANK.
THANKS FOR YOUR HELP...
THAT WAS MY AIM. BUT THERE'S NO POINT IF YOU GET KILLED. SO HURRY UP AND RUN FAR AWAY.


SPLASH
AH! THE HORSE!
FAREWELL.
GETTING OUT OF THIS COUNTRY IS EASY, BUT I NEVER DID FIND THE ONE I'M FATED TO MEET.

REMEMBER ME? IT'S FRIEBE! I'VE BEEN WAITING.
YOO-HOO!
COME WITH ME!
KEEP WANDERING AROUND IN THAT OUTFIT AND YOU'LL GET CAUGHT.
PLEASE LET ME GO.
YOU WERE IN QUITE A SPOT.
I HEARD YOU BROKE OUT OF JAIL.
THIS IS MY HIDE-OUT.
THERE.

"MUMBLE"
"MUMBLE"
KREAK
UH...
"MUMBLE"
"MUMBLE!"
"MUMBLE"
...
"MUMBLE"
This is a very special guest Please shelter her
THESE WERE HER LATE SON'S CLOTHES. THIS WILL THROW OFF ANYONE FOLLOWING YOU, SHE SAYS!
"MUMBLE"
"MUMBLE"
I THINK SHE'LL BE ABLE TO HELP YOU.

THESE WERE FROM WHEN HER SON WAS 12. YOU'RE QUITE BOYISH!
GO GET CHANGED!
HEH HEH, I DON'T NEED YOU TO.
THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR SAVING ME. BUT I DON'T HAVE ANY WAY TO REPAY YOU.
YOU KNOW HOW MAIDENS OFTEN FIND TRUE LOVE AMONG THE COMPETITORS AT THE TOURNAMENT, RIGHT?
...
NO, I MUST. YOU SAVED MY LIFE.

WHAT?!
WHAT WOULD YOU SAY?
IF THAT SOMEONE TURNED OUT TO BE YOU,
I WANT SOMEONE WHO'S SKILLED WITH A SWORD AND VERY CHARMING,
WITH BLACK HAIR AND LOVELY EYES, AND LONG, DEER-LIKE LEGS...
OH, NO ...
ONCE I MAKE UP MY MIND TO DO SOMETHING, I NEVER GIVE UP.
WHY NOT?
YOU MUST BE JOKING! I-I CAN'T MARRY YOU!
IF YOU DON'T LIKE MY ARMOR, WHAT ABOUT THIS DRESS? SEE, I'M A PROPER GIRL!
I LOVE YOU, SAPPHIRE!
WAIT A MINUTE.

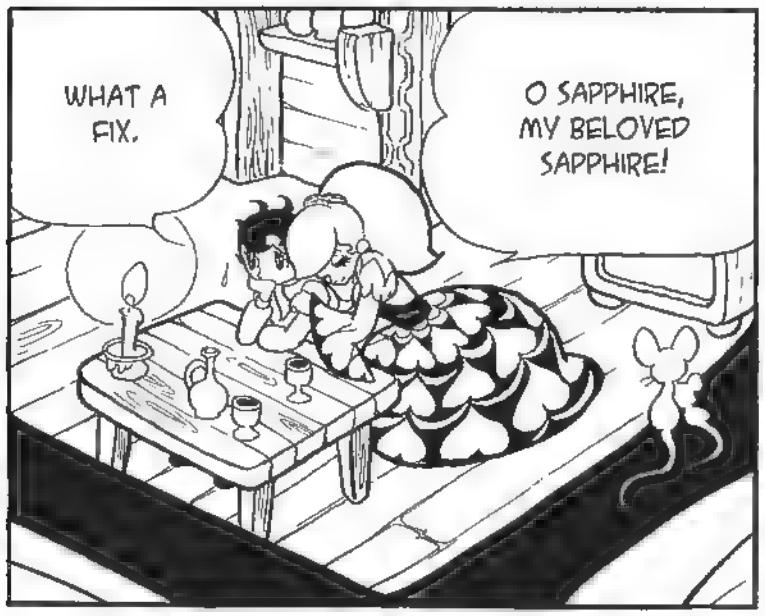
I MAY BE A SWORDSWOMAN, BUT I CAN COOK AND CLEAN, TOO.
I WANT TO HANG THIS AROUND THE NECK OF MY BETROTHED, INSTEAD OF A RING.
I DECIDED WE SHOULD WED TOMORROW NOON.
YIPE!
HUH?!
I HAD THAT OLD LADY CALL THE PASTOR.
I KNOW, I'M PUSHY.
YOU CAN'T RUN AWAY!
WHISH
NO! I CAN'T MARRY YOU! PLEASE GIVE IT UP!

FRIEBE, I CAN'T TELL YOU WHY, BUT THERE'S A REASON I CAN'T MARRY YOU.
SO, WILL YOU MARRY ME? IF YOU WON'T, I'LL THROW YOU TO YOUR PURSUERS.

WHAT?! ARE YOU MAKING FUN OF ME?
WHICH IS IT? OUI? OR NON?

I DON'T KNOW. I MIGHT HAVE ONE, AND IF I DO ...

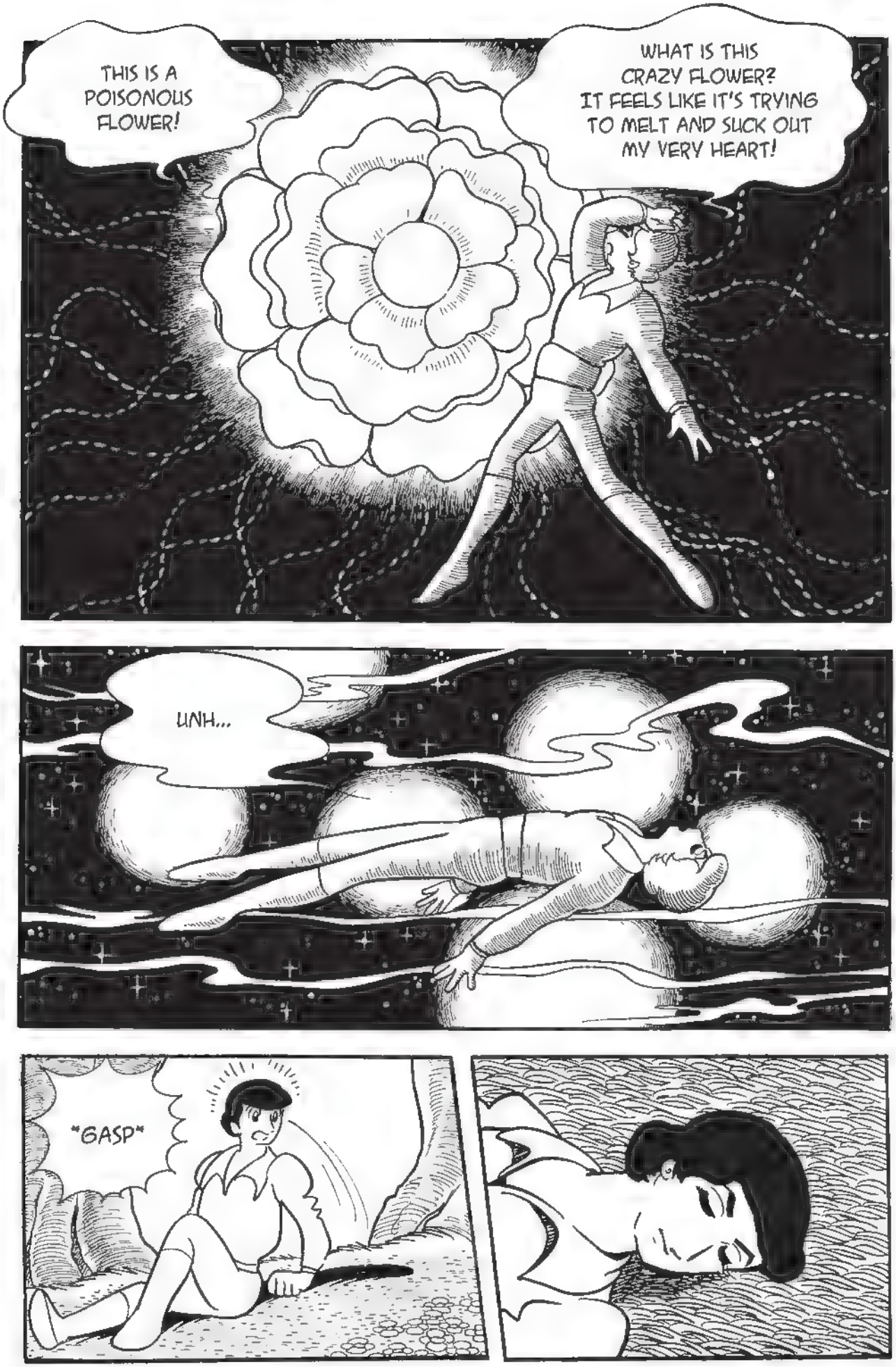
DO YOU... HAVE A LOVER? WHO IS SHE?

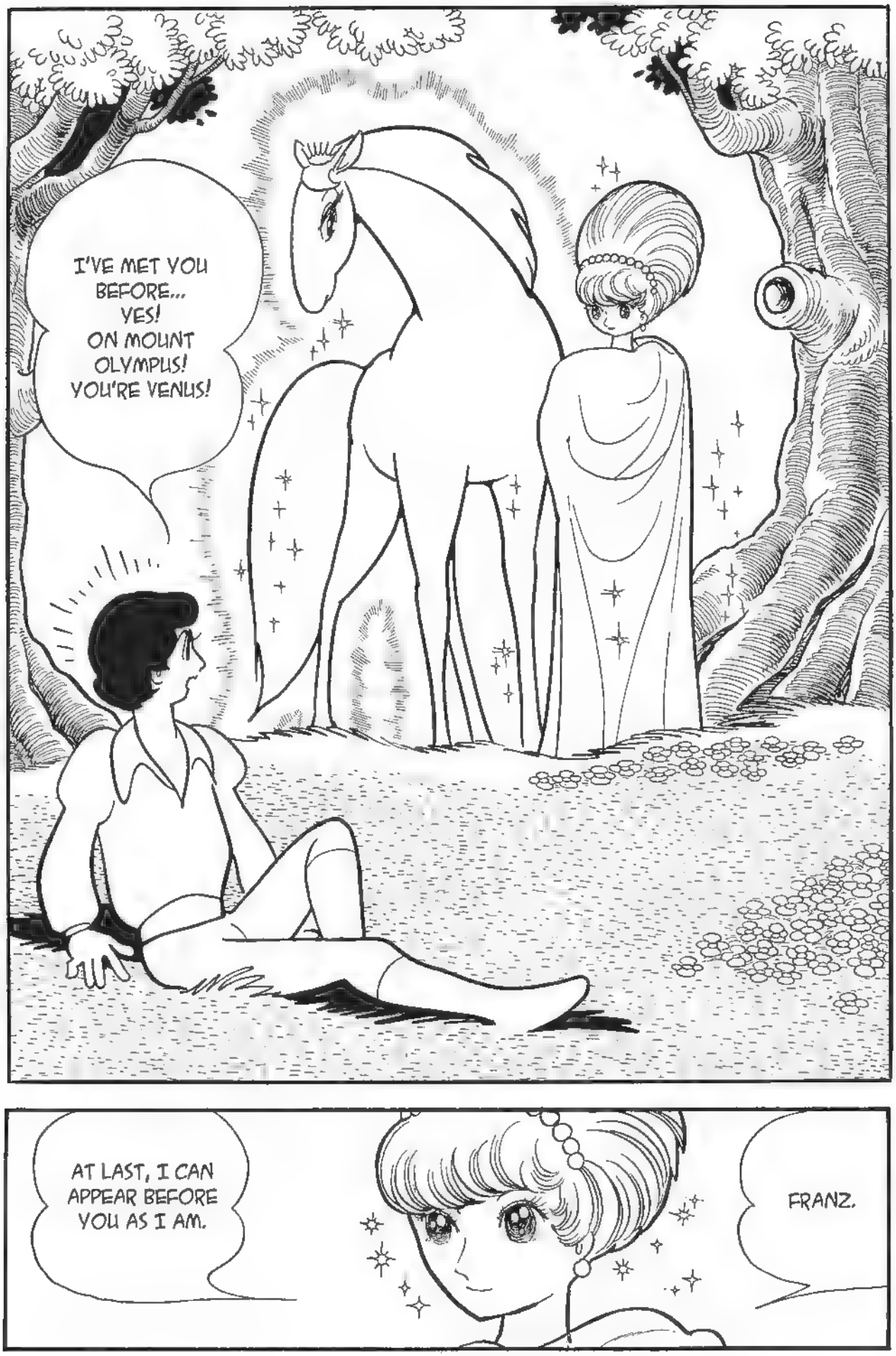

WHAT A FIX.
O SAPPHIRE, MY BELOVED SAPPHIRE!

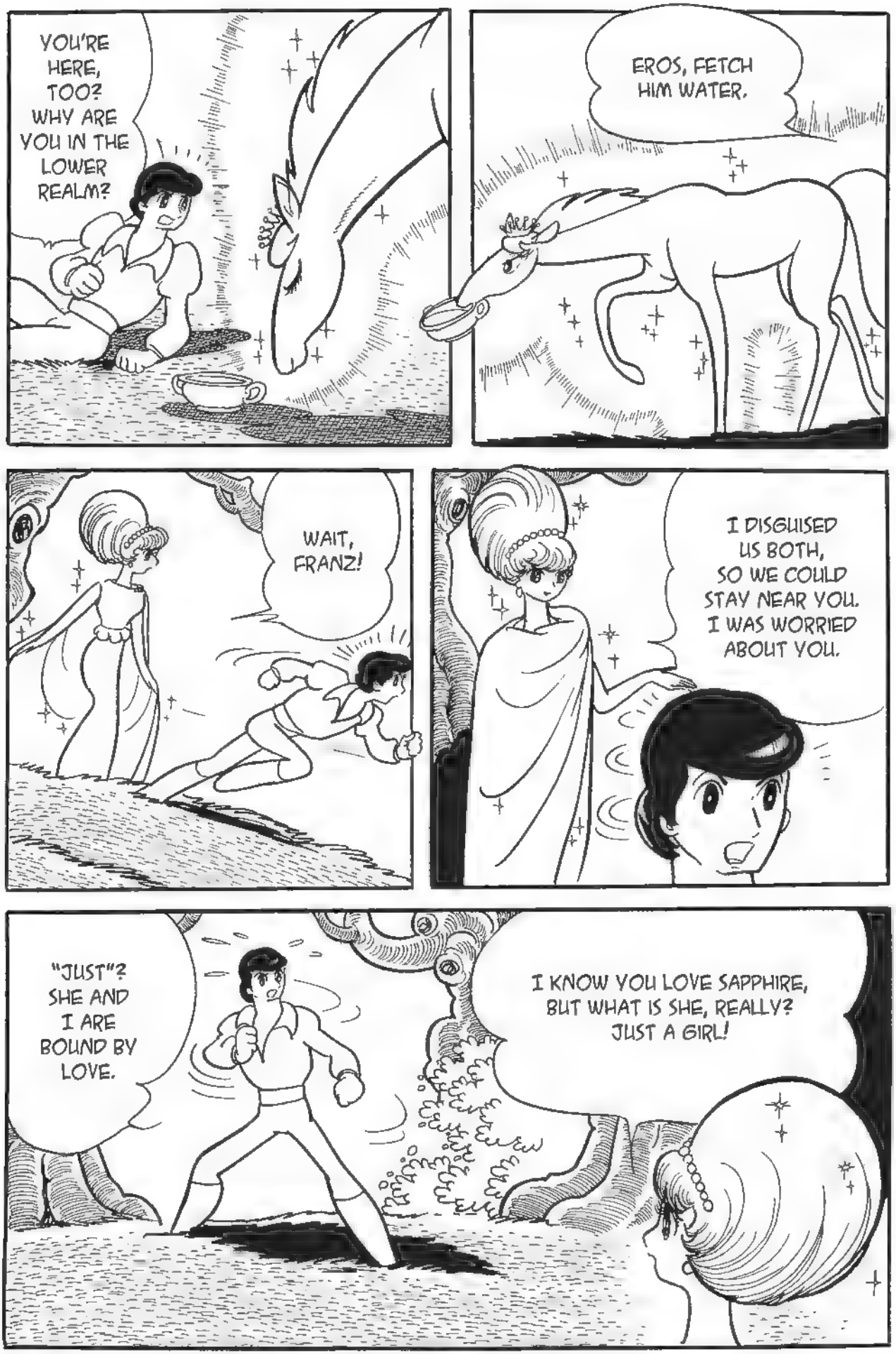
... OUI.

PLEASE TELL ME! IS SHE IMPRISONED HERE?
HER NAME'S SAPPHIRE. SHE COMPETED IN THE TOURNAMENT. RUMOR HAS IT SHE'S JAILED HERE.
SAPPHIRE ...
SAPPHIRE!!
OH, YOU MEAN ME?
A SLIM, NOBLE YOUTH.
NO IDEA.
WEARS A RIBBON?
HMM, NOPE.
DO YOU KNOW A KNIGHT NAMED SAPPHIRE?

MY MISTRESS ASKED ME TO GIVE YOU THESE FLOWERS. PLEASE ACCEPT THEM.
IT'S BEEN A WHILE, LORD FRANZ...
YOU MEAN THAT GIRL?
LORD FRANZ. LORD FRANZ.
LORD FRANZ! WHAT'S WRONG?
AH!!


THIS IS A POISONOUS FLOWER!
WHAT IS THIS CRAZY FLOWER? IT FEELS LIKE IT'S TRYING TO MELT AND SUCK OUT MY VERY HEART!
UNH...
"GASP"


I'VE MET YOU BEFORE... YES! ON MOUNT OLYMPUS! YOU'RE VENUS!
AT LAST, I CAN APPEAR BEFORE YOU AS I AM.
FRANZ.


YOU'RE HERE, TOO? WHY ARE YOU IN THE LOWER REALM?
EROS, FETCH HIM WATER.
WAIT, FRANZ!
I DISGUISED US BOTH, SO WE COULD STAY NEAR YOU. I WAS WORRIED ABOUT YOU.
"JUST"? SHE AND I ARE BOUND BY LOVE.
I KNOW YOU LOVE SAPPHIRE, BUT WHAT IS SHE, REALLY? JUST A GIRL!

HOW IMMATURE. DON'T YOU WANT A DEEPER, MORE INTENSE LOVE?
HOW DARE YOU INTERFERE! I WILL MARRY SAPPHIRE, NO MATTER WHAT! LEAVE US BE!
BOUND? HO HO HO. SAPPHIRE HAS COMPLETELY FORGOTTEN WHO YOU ARE.
EXCUSE ME.
LET ME BE PERFECTLY CLEAR— SAPPHIRE IS 100 TIMES MORE LOVELY THAN YOU!
FLUTTER
AH!
BEEP-BEEP

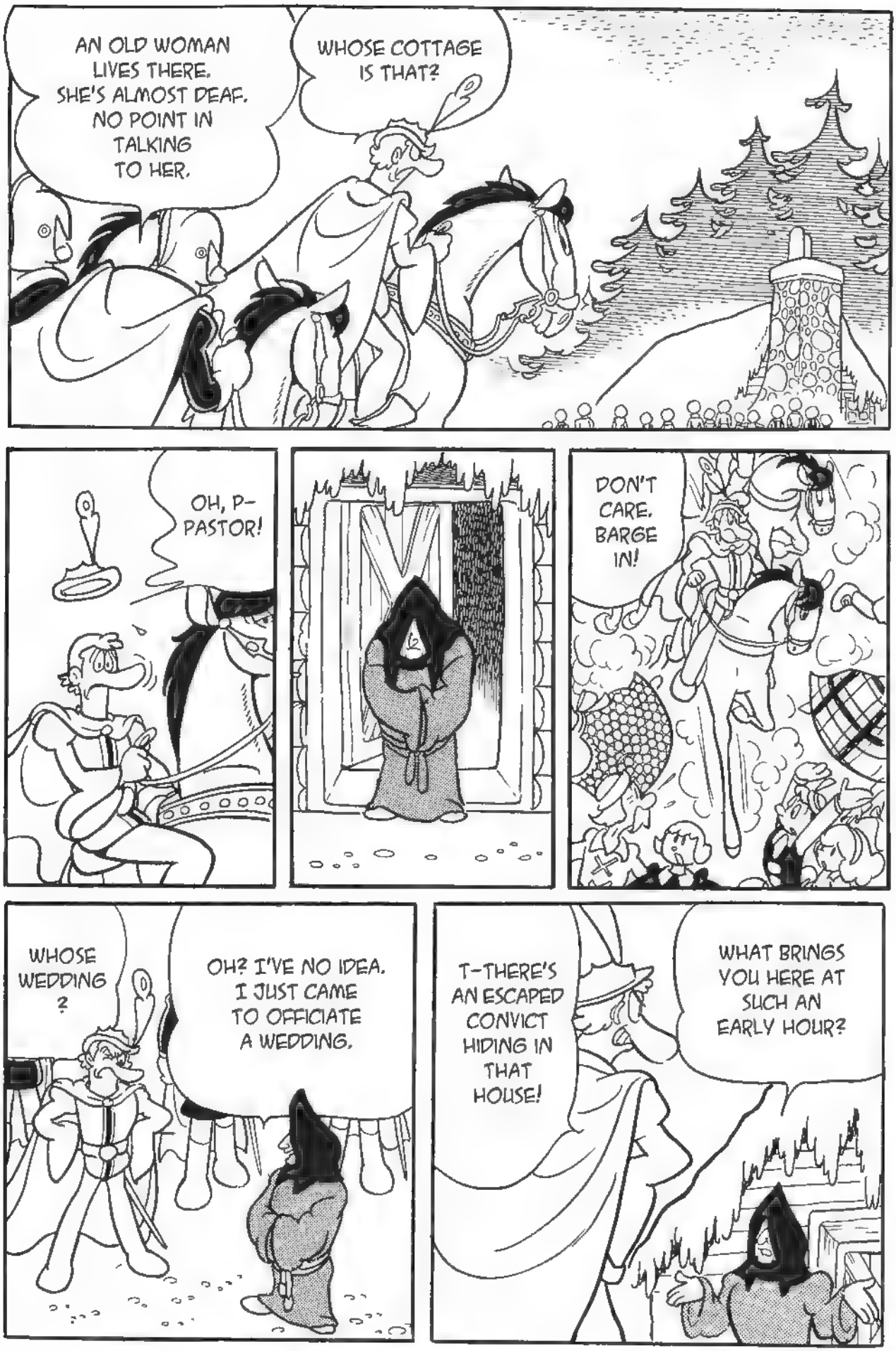
HER CLOAK HAS SURROUNDED ME LIKE A DENSE FOG!
STOP THIS AT ONCE!
HO HO HO
WHAT?!
YOU'LL NEVER SEE SAPPHIRE AGAIN. THERE'S NO POINT IN SEARCHING FOR HER!

VENUS, WHERE THE HELL ARE YOU ?!
WHAT'S THIS? JUST HOW MANY LAYERS ARE THERE?!
SLIPPED
DO YOU REMEMBER THIS FLOWER?
I'LL FORGIVE YOU FOR ADDRESSING ME SO RUDELY. I CAN'T BE ANGRY AT YOU.
THAT WAS BLOOMING IN THE GARDEN ON OLYMPUS...
I DON'T CARE IF YOU'RE A GODDESS OR HOW STRONG YOUR MAGIC IS, YOU'LL NEVER TEAR US APART!

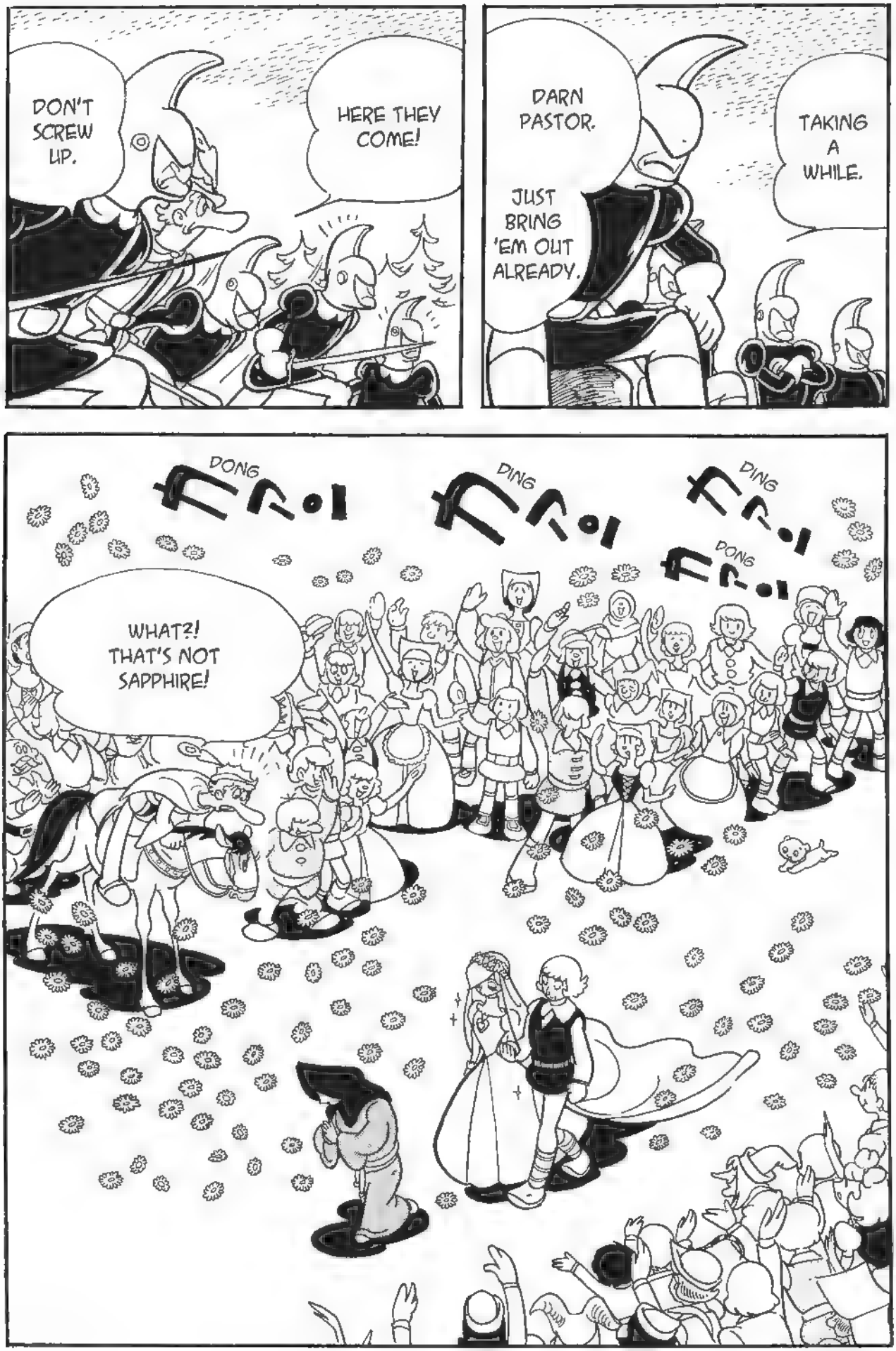
AND THIS ONE HOLDS THE LOVE OF DEATH. IF YOU PLACE THIS ON YOUR CHEST, YOU'LL DIE.
YES. THIS FLOWER HOLDS THE BURNING PASSION THAT LOVERS FEEL FOR ONE ANOTHER.
IF YOU DON'T CHOOSE, I'LL KEEP YOU BOUND IN THIS CLOAK FOREVER.
YOU DARE THREATEN ME?!
FRANZ, I WANT YOU TO CHOOSE ONE OF THESE FLOWERS.
DO YOU REALLY WANT TO DIE?
IF YOU WANT TO LEAVE, CHOOSE.

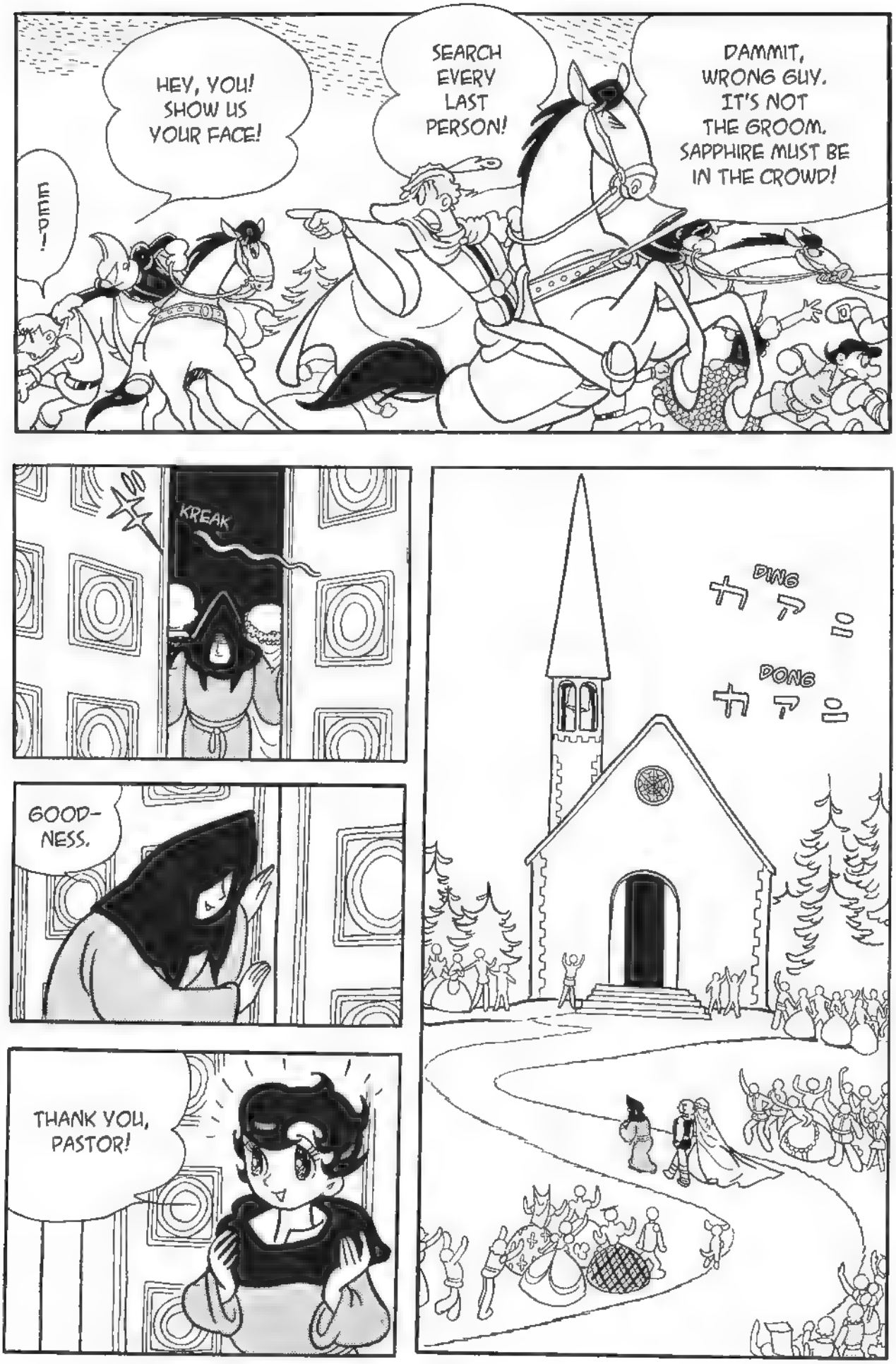
STOP TORMENTING ME!
YES.
I-IF I CHOOSE THAT ONE, WON'T I FALL IN LOVE WITH YOU?
TRY THIS ONE...
VENUS !!
I DON'T CARE IF I DIE. EVEN IF IT MEANS DEATH, YOU'LL NEVER ERASE MY LOVE FOR SAPPHIRE!
WHAT HAPPENED TO SAPPHIRE?
WHAT?!
SAPPHIRE HAS ESCAPED FROM THE DUNGEON!

KILL HIM ON SIGHT.
YOU, SEARCH THERE. YOU GO INTO THE HEART OF THE FOREST. LOOK EVERYWHERE! CHECK EACH AND EVERY HOUSE!
YESSIR.
I CAN'T CARRY ON LIKE THIS. I'LL LOOK FOR SAPPHIRE, TOO.


WHOSE COTTAGE IS THAT?
AN OLD WOMAN LIVES THERE. SHE'S ALMOST DEAF. NO POINT IN TALKING TO HER.
OH, P-PASTOR!
DON'T CARE. BARGE IN!
WHOSE WEDDING?
OH? I'VE NO IDEA. I JUST CAME TO OFFICIATE A WEDDING.
T-THERE'S AN ESCAPED CONVICT HIDING IN THAT HOUSE!
WHAT BRINGS YOU HERE AT SUCH AN EARLY HOUR?

IT'S A HOLY CEREMONY. IF YOU DISTURB US BEFORE IT ENDS, GOD WILL PUNISH YOU.
YOU SHALL NOT PASS!
THAT MUST BE SAPPHIRE! LEMME SEE 'IM!
PARDON ME...
ALL RIGHT, FINE.
THE BRIDE AND GROOM WILL PASS BY HERE SHORTLY ON THEIR WAY TO THE CHAPEL. YOU CAN SEE WHO THE GROOM IS THEN.
YESSIR!
DISGUISED AS THE GROOM, AND WILL TRY TO SNEAK AWAY. WHEN I GIVE THE SIGNAL, STAB HIM TO DEATH. GOT IT?
LISTEN, SAPPHIRE'S PROBABLY


DON'T SCREW UP.
HERE THEY COME!
DARN PASTOR.
JUST BRING 'EM OUT ALREADY.
TAKING A WHILE.
DONG
DING
DING
DONG
WHAT?! THAT'S NOT SAPPHIRE!


HEY, YOU! SHOW US YOUR FACE!
SEARCH EVERY LAST PERSON!
DAMMIT, WRONG GUY. IT'S NOT THE GROOM. SAPPHIRE MUST BE IN THE CROWD!
KREAK
GOOD-NESS.
THANK YOU, PASTOR!
DING
DONG

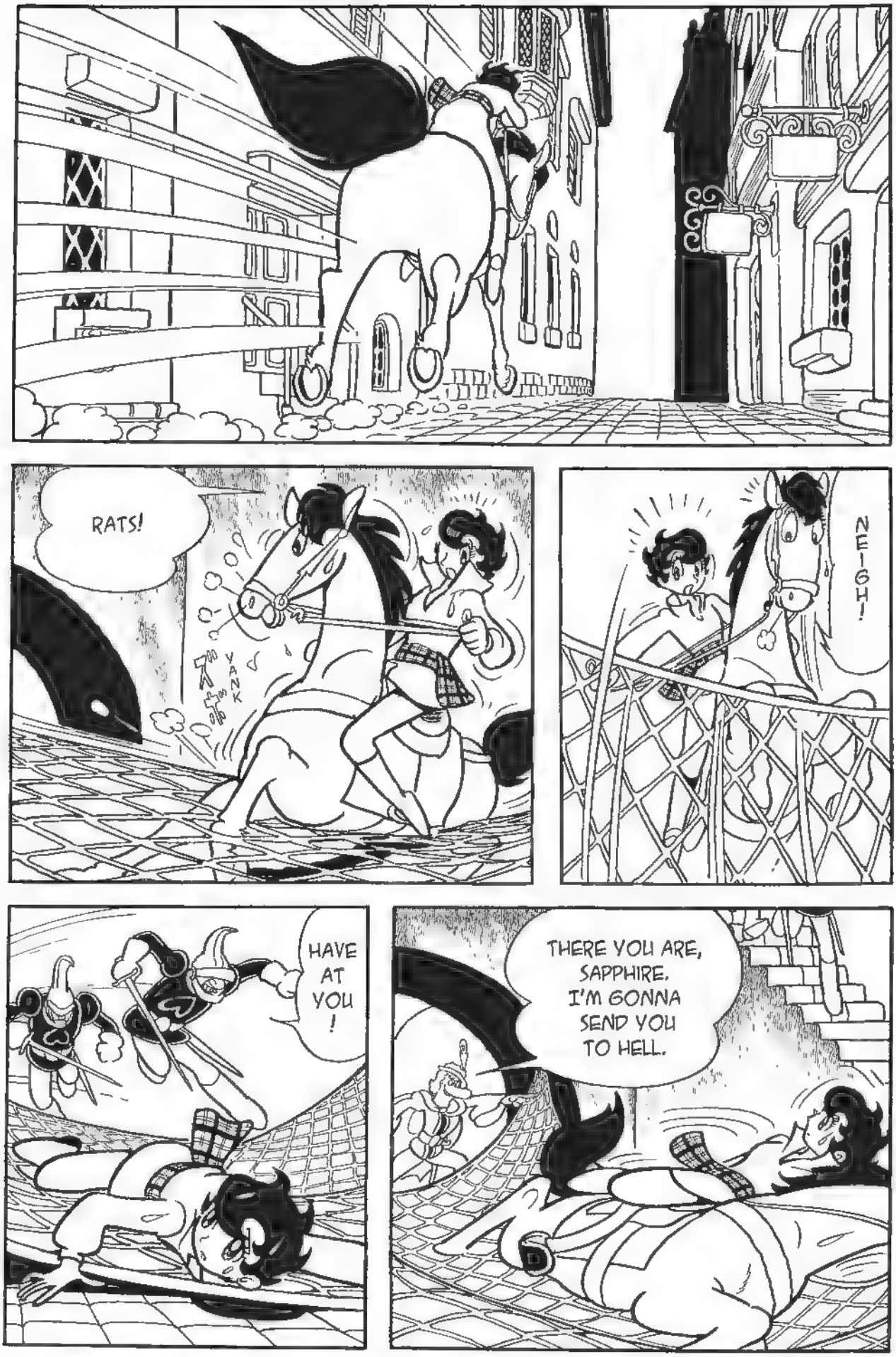
YOU LOOKED GREAT AS A GROOM.
HA HA! IT FELT LIKE I WAS A LAYMAN AGAIN!
SINCE YOU TRADED PLACES WITH ME, THEY NEVER EVEN SUSPECTED! THANKS!
IF WE WASTE TOO MUCH TIME THEY'LL GET SUSPICIOUS OF US AGAIN.
ALL RIGHT, LET'S GET YOU TWO MARRIED, QUICKLY!
SAPPHIRE, YOU SHALL BE HUSBAND, HOUSEHOLD HEAD AND MASTER...
AHEM. O FATHER WHO ART IN HEAVEN, THY WILL BE DONE ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN.
I WILL NOW OFFICIATE THE MARRIAGE OF SAPPHIRE AND FRIEBE.

DO YOU ?
...
DO YOU SWEAR TO LOVE THIS WOMAN FOR THE REST OF YOUR NATURAL LIFE?
WHAT'S THE MATTER?
WHAT'S WRONG? STILL GOT COLD FEET?
I DRESS LIKE THIS, BUT I AM A WOMAN, A PRINCESS!
NO, IT CAN'T BE TRUE! THAT IS ABSURD!
W-WHAT ?!
HUH ?!
PLEASE FORGIVE ME, PASTOR, FRIEBE. I-I AM A WOMAN. I'M NOT A MAN.

SEE?
YOU CAN'T FOOL ME WITH SUCH TRICKS!
DON'T MESS AROUND!
LOOK, FRIEBE.
HA HA HA
HA HA HA
HO HO HO
HO HO HO
WE CAN'T HAVE GIRLS MARRY-ING OTHER GIRLS!
OH, THIS IS SACRILEGIOUS. SO MUCH ADO FOR NOTHING.

HA HA HA HA HA HA HA
OH... TOO PERFECT...
Heh ...
AHA HA HA HA
AHA HA HA HA HA
BUT ...
YOU DON'T NEED TO TELL ME. I'M SURE YOU HAVE YOUR REASONS.
WHY AM I EVEN DRESSED AS A MAN?
I SHOULDN'T HAVE GOTTEN YOUR HOPES UP.
I'M SORRY, FRIEBE. THIS IS MY FAULT.

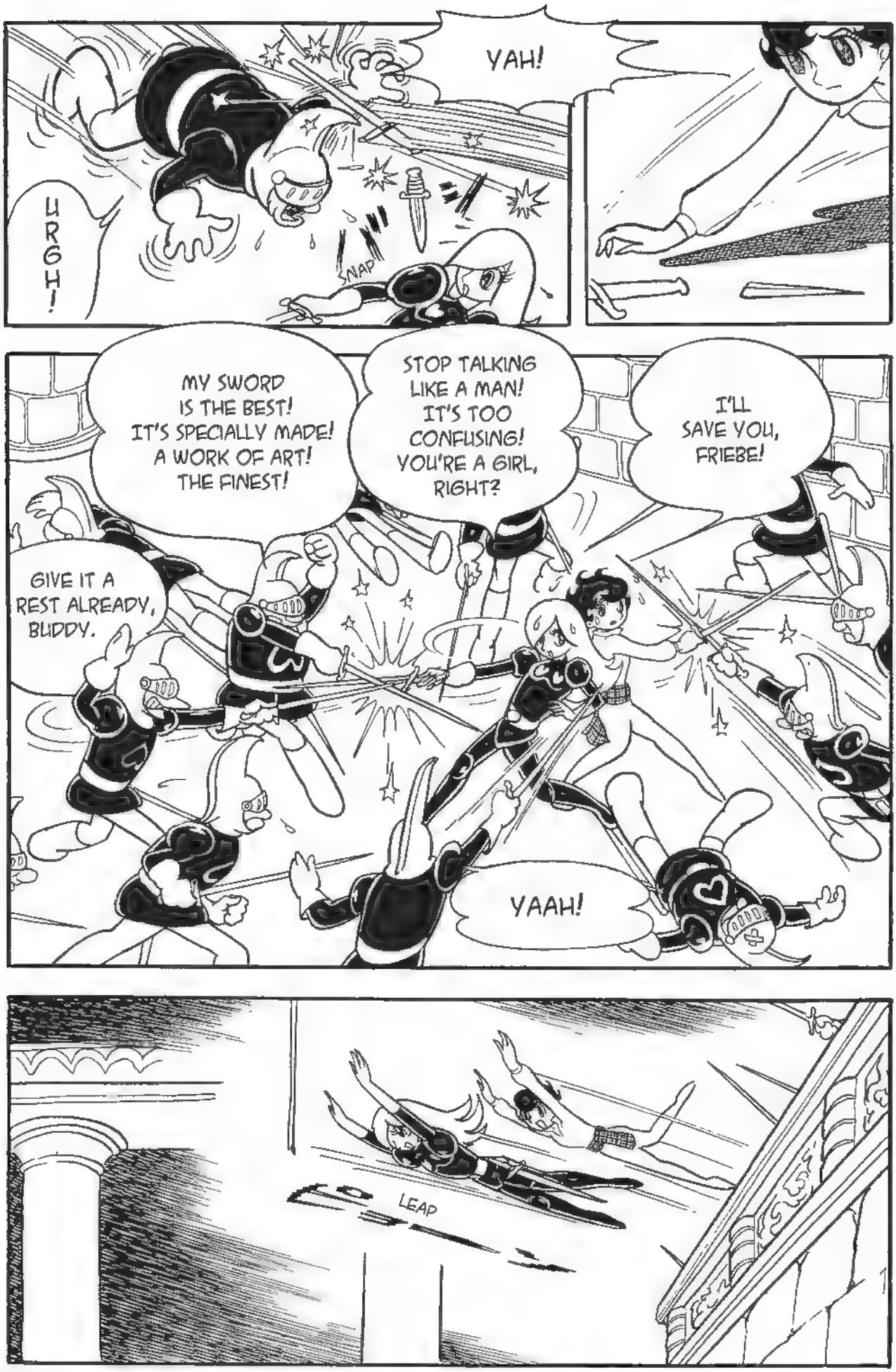
THERE'S A STABLE AND SADDLES IN THE BACK.
YOU NEED TO FLEE THIS COUNTRY BEFORE THEY FIND YOU.
TAKE THIS SWORD!
HURRY UP! RUN!
STOP THANKING US AND GO!
THANK YOU FRIEBE, PASTOR. I WON'T FORGET YOUR KINDNESS.

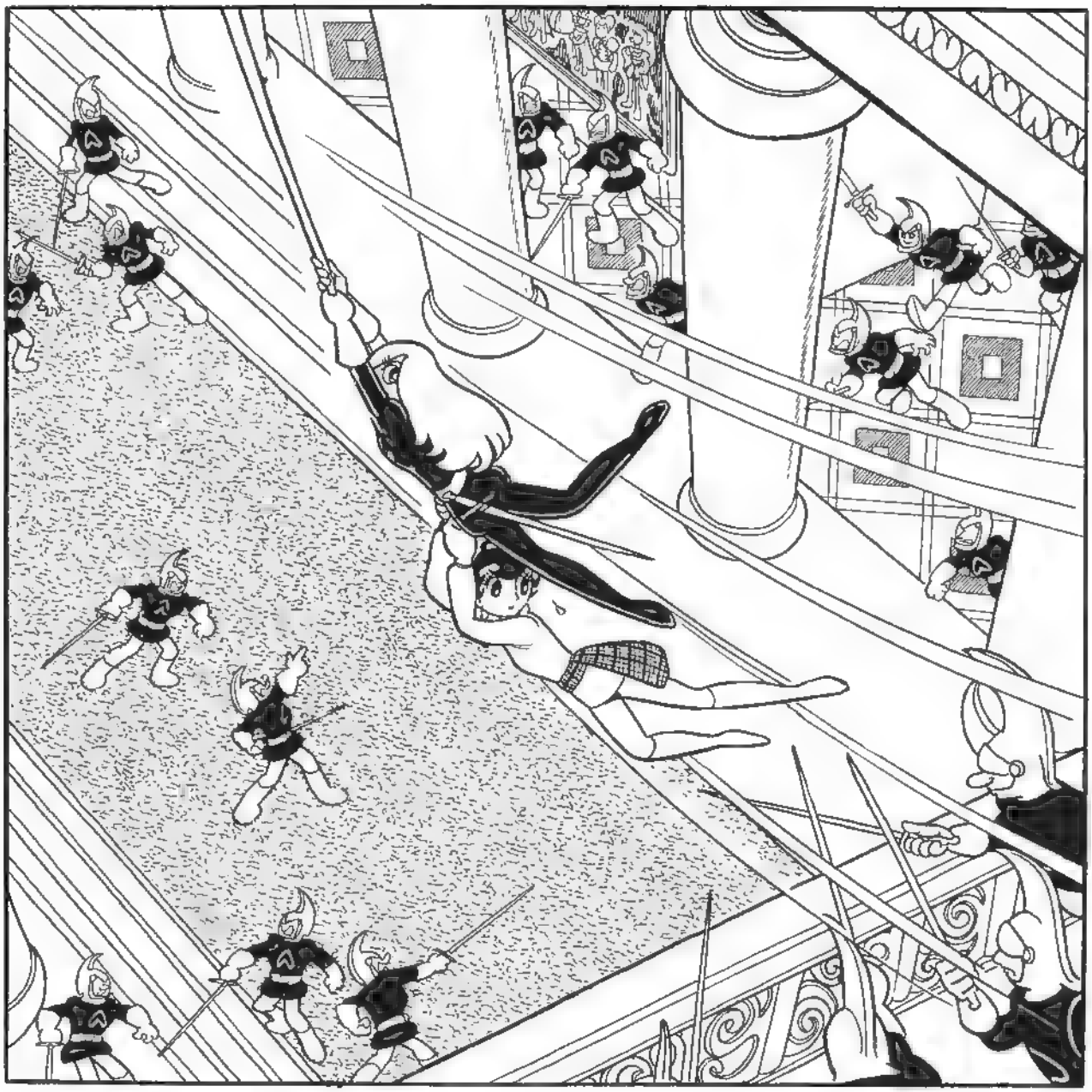

RATS!
YANK
NEIGH!
HAVE AT YOU!
THERE YOU ARE, SAPPHIRE. I'M GONNA SEND YOU TO HELL.

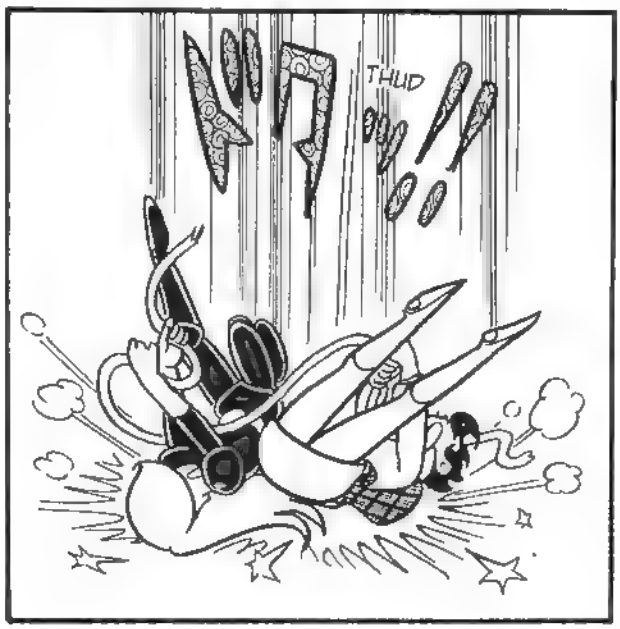
COWARD!!
AGH!
HURRY DOWN THAT HOLE! I'LL FEND THEM OFF!

UH!
UH!
THIS WAY!
THEY'VE SURROUNDED US. WE'LL JUST HAVE TO PIERCE THROUGH.

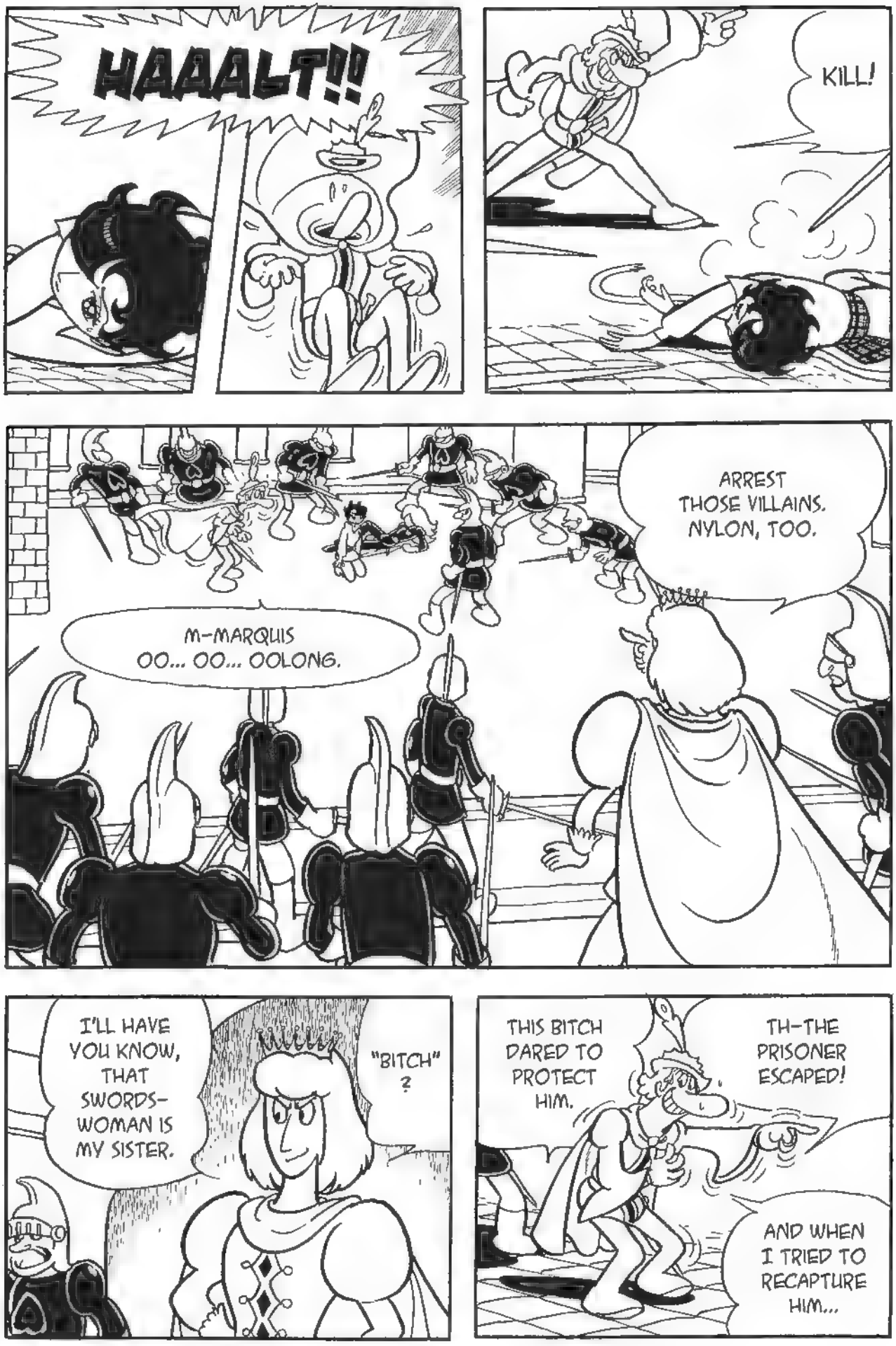
I MEAN THIS.
WHADDYA MEAN, BARGAIN SALE?!
EN GARDE! MY SWORD'S MUCH STRONGER THAN THOSE FLIMSY BLADES YOU BOUGHT AT A BARGAIN SALE!
GOT IT!
GOT IT?
FSK
KLINK
KLANK
KLONK
WATCH OUT, FRIEBE !!
KLANG
KLANG


YAH!
URGH!
SNAP
MY SWORD IS THE BEST! IT'S SPECIALLY MADE! A WORK OF ART! THE FINEST!
STOP TALKING LIKE A MAN! IT'S TOO CONFUSING! YOU'RE A GIRL, RIGHT?
I'LL SAVE YOU, FRIEBE!
GIVE IT A REST ALREADY, BUDDY.
YAAH!
LEAP




THUD

ブッリ
SNAP


HAAALT!!
KILL!
ARREST THOSE VILLAINS. NYLON, TOO.
M-MARQUIS OO... OO... OOLONG.
I'LL HAVE YOU KNOW, THAT SWORDS-WOMAN IS MY SISTER.
"BITCH"?
THIS BITCH DARED TO PROTECT HIM.
TH-THE PRISONER ESCAPED!
AND WHEN I TRIED TO RECAPTURE HIM...

WHY DID YOU DARE GIVE ORDERS TO MY TROOPS WITHOUT MY PERMISSION?
NO, "THE IMPUDENT NYLON."
SIR NYLON ...
HUH?
AND EXILE HIM TO AFRICA.
GIVE HIM 100 LASHES
DID YOU WED SIR SAPPHIRE?
FRIEBE!
BROTHER!
WHAT?!
BROTHER... SAPPHIRE IS A WOMAN!

DON'T FEEL BAD, FRIEBE. YOU'LL FIND A NICE YOUNG MAN SOON.
YOU CAN FIND BRAVE WOMEN LIKE FRIEBE WHO ARE AS MANLY AS ANY MAN IN EVERY COUNTRY.
AH... HA! HOW GALLING!
TAKE CARE ON YOUR JOURNEY HOME.
KIDDING, KIDDING!
I GUESS I'LL MARRY SAPPHIRE.
BEFORE YOU REACH THE BORDER YOU MIGHT ENCOUNTER BANDITS, ROBBERS, PICKPOCKETS, GIANTS, ABOMINABLE SNOWMEN, MONSTERS, GHOSTS, DEMONS, WOLVES, VIPERS, SCORPIONS, DRAGONS OR LONG-NOSED GOBLINS. FAREWELL!

Chapter 27

Miracle on the Hill

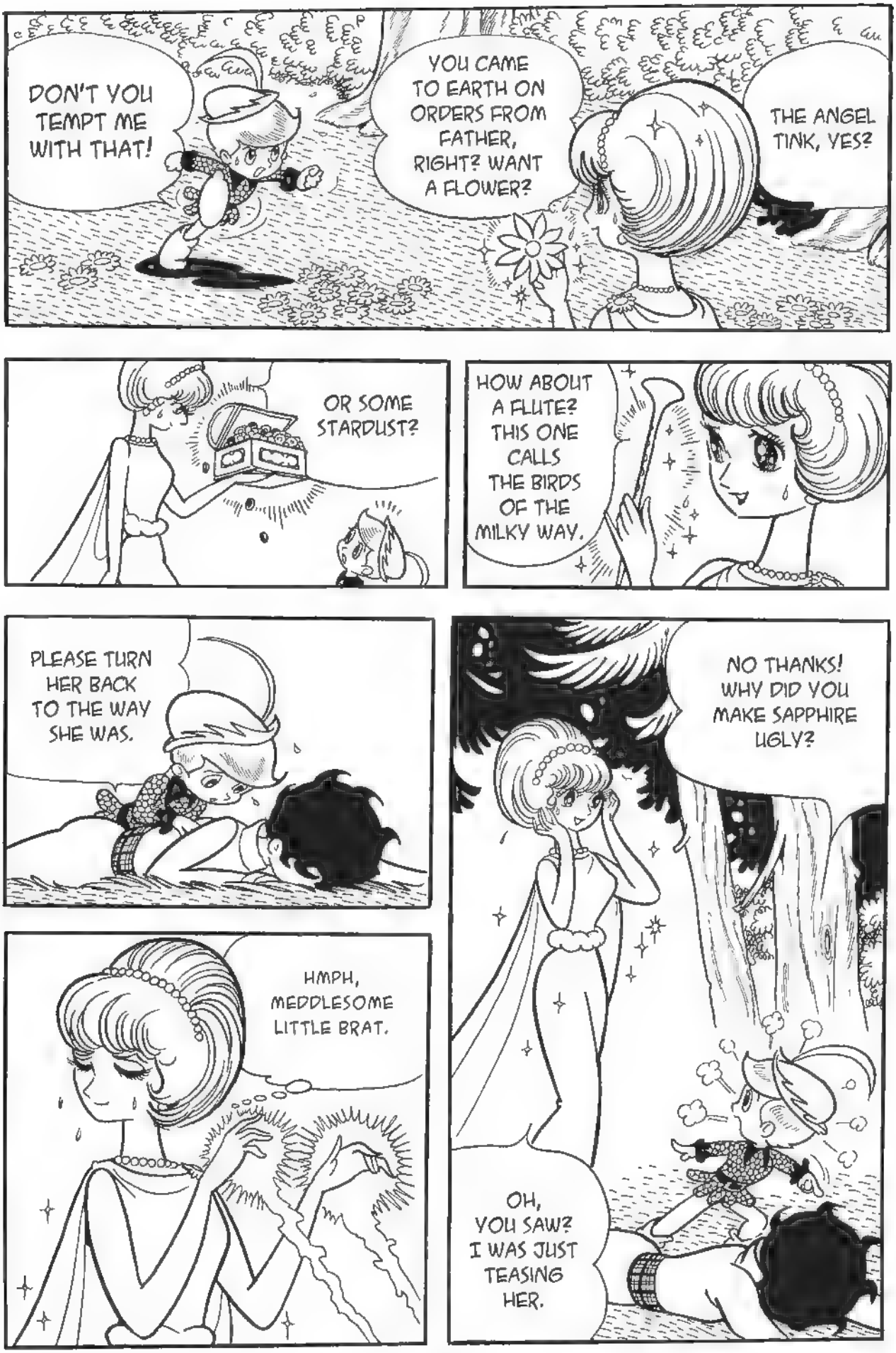
OH, A STRANGE BIRD IS COMING THIS WAY.
RAWK!

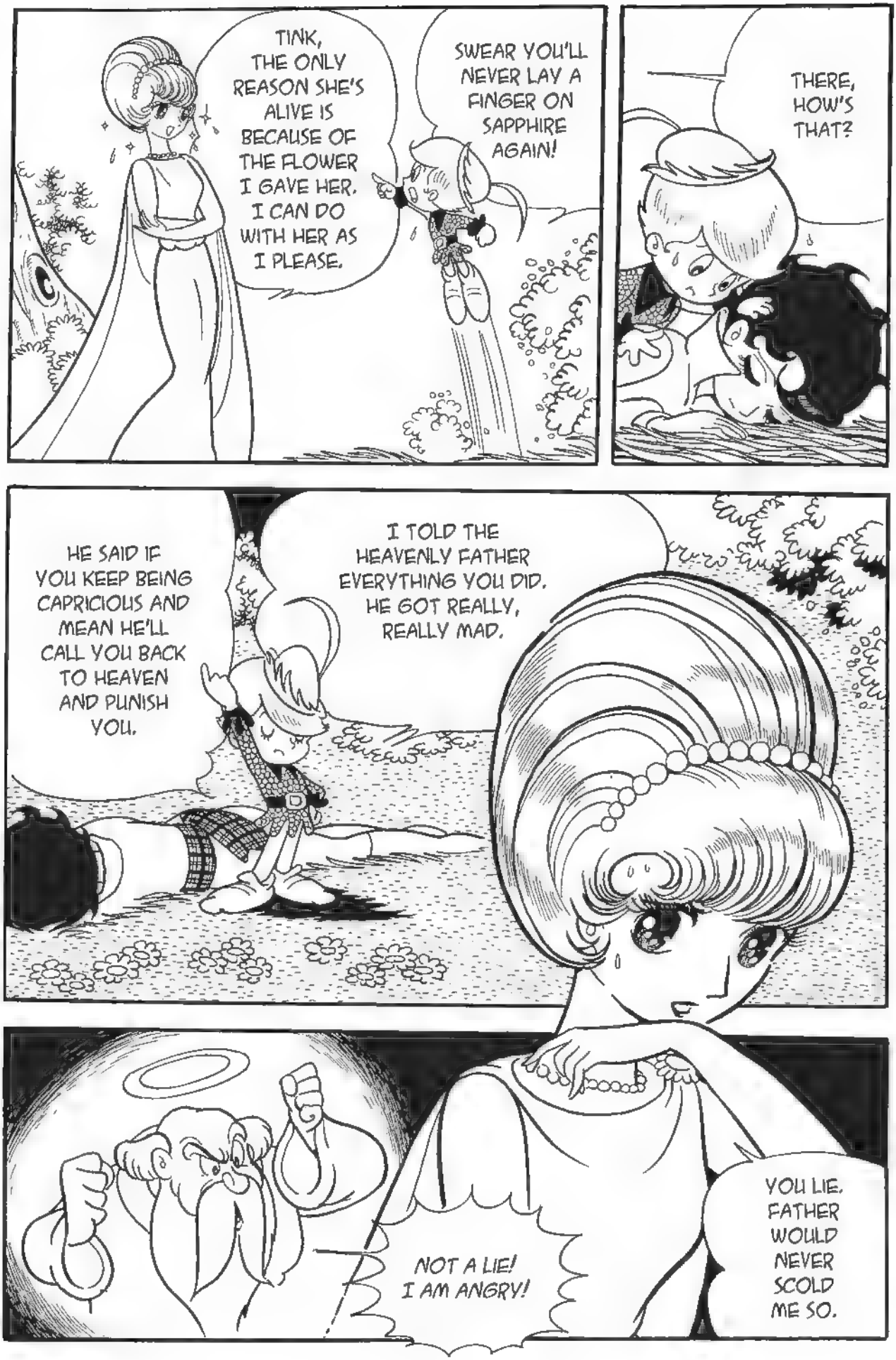
WHO ARE YOU? A DEMON? A SPIRIT?
HO HO HO HO HO HO ...
AAAH!
SHOOP
OH HO HO HO !
THUD

AVAUNT, YOU MONSTER! YAAH!
WHO ARE YOU...?
HO HO HO... THIS IS THE FIRST TIME YOU'VE SEEN ME AS I TRULY AM.
I AM VENUS, THE GODDESS OF BEAUTY AND LOVE. I'VE BEEN NEAR YOU FOR SOME TIME. SEEMS LIKE YOU NEVER NOTICED.
YOU WERE NEAR ME? BUT I WAS TRAVELING, AND LOCKED IN A DUNGEON...
I KNOW. I'M THE ONE WHO PUT YOU THERE.
WHY?!

FRANZ CHARMING?!
TO TEAR YOU AWAY FROM FRANZ CHARMING.
WHERE IS HE?
I REMEMBER! THE PRINCE OF GOLDLAND!
FRANZ... AH!!
WHAT?
BECOME UGLY, SAPPHIRE. I'LL MAKE YOU SO HIDEOUS FRANZ WILL NEVER TURN TO FACE YOU AGAIN. THAT'S MY GIFT TO YOU.

YOU DARE TO SIDELINE ME, THE GODDESS OF LOVE, AND CLAIM FRANZ FOR YOURSELF? HOW BRAZEN!
ACCEPT MY GIFT!
ARGH!
STOP, VENUS! I DON'T CARE IF YOU'RE A GODDESS, I, TINK WON'T ALLOW YOU!

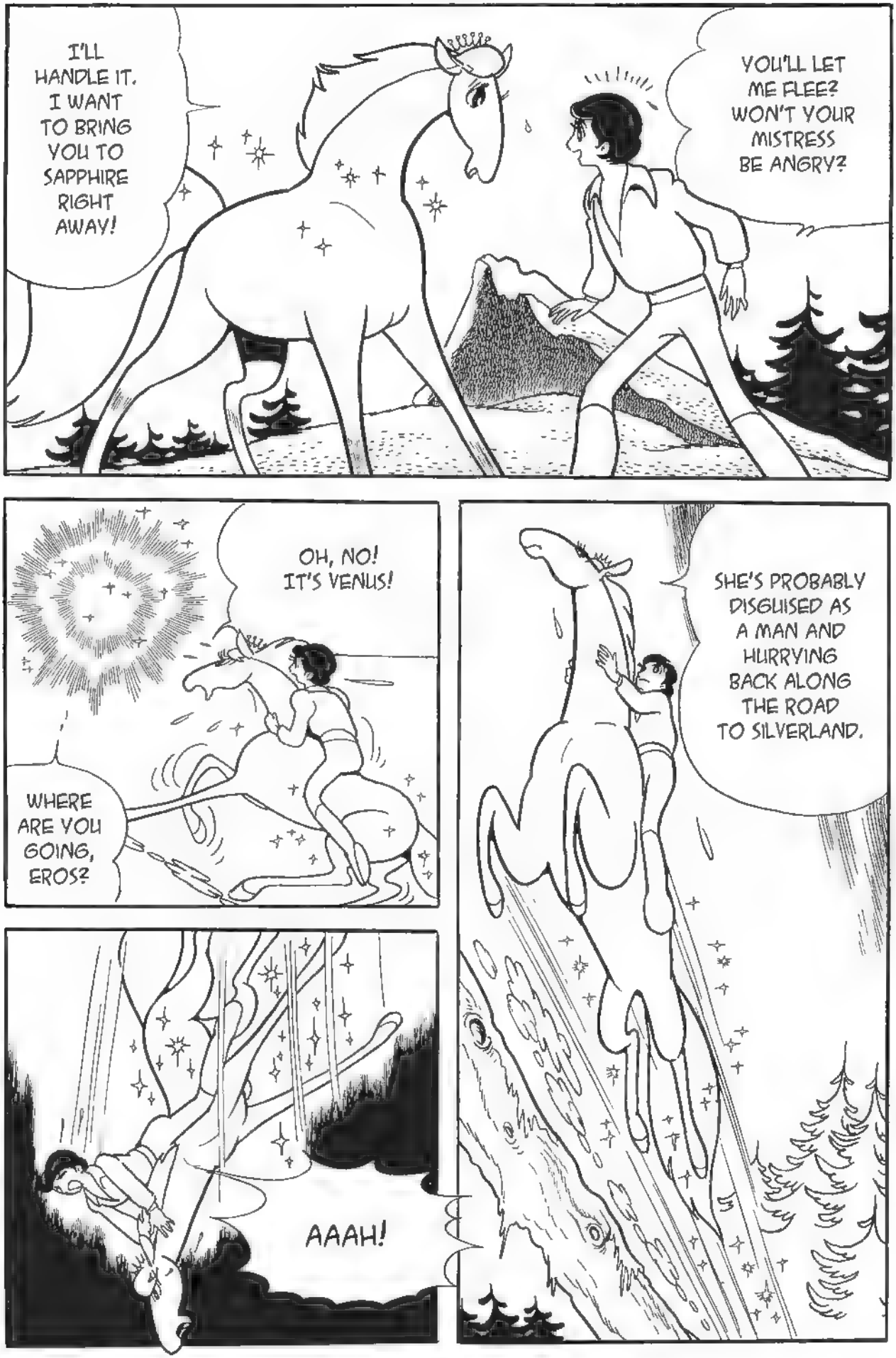

DON'T YOU TEMPT ME WITH THAT!
YOU CAME TO EARTH ON ORDERS FROM FATHER, RIGHT? WANT A FLOWER?
THE ANGEL TINK, YES?
OR SOME STARDUST?
HOW ABOUT A FLUTE? THIS ONE CALLS THE BIRDS OF THE MILKY WAY.
PLEASE TURN HER BACK TO THE WAY SHE WAS.
NO THANKS! WHY DID YOU MAKE SAPPHIRE UGLY?
HMPH, MEDDLESOME LITTLE BRAT.
OH, YOU SAW? I WAS JUST TEASING HER.

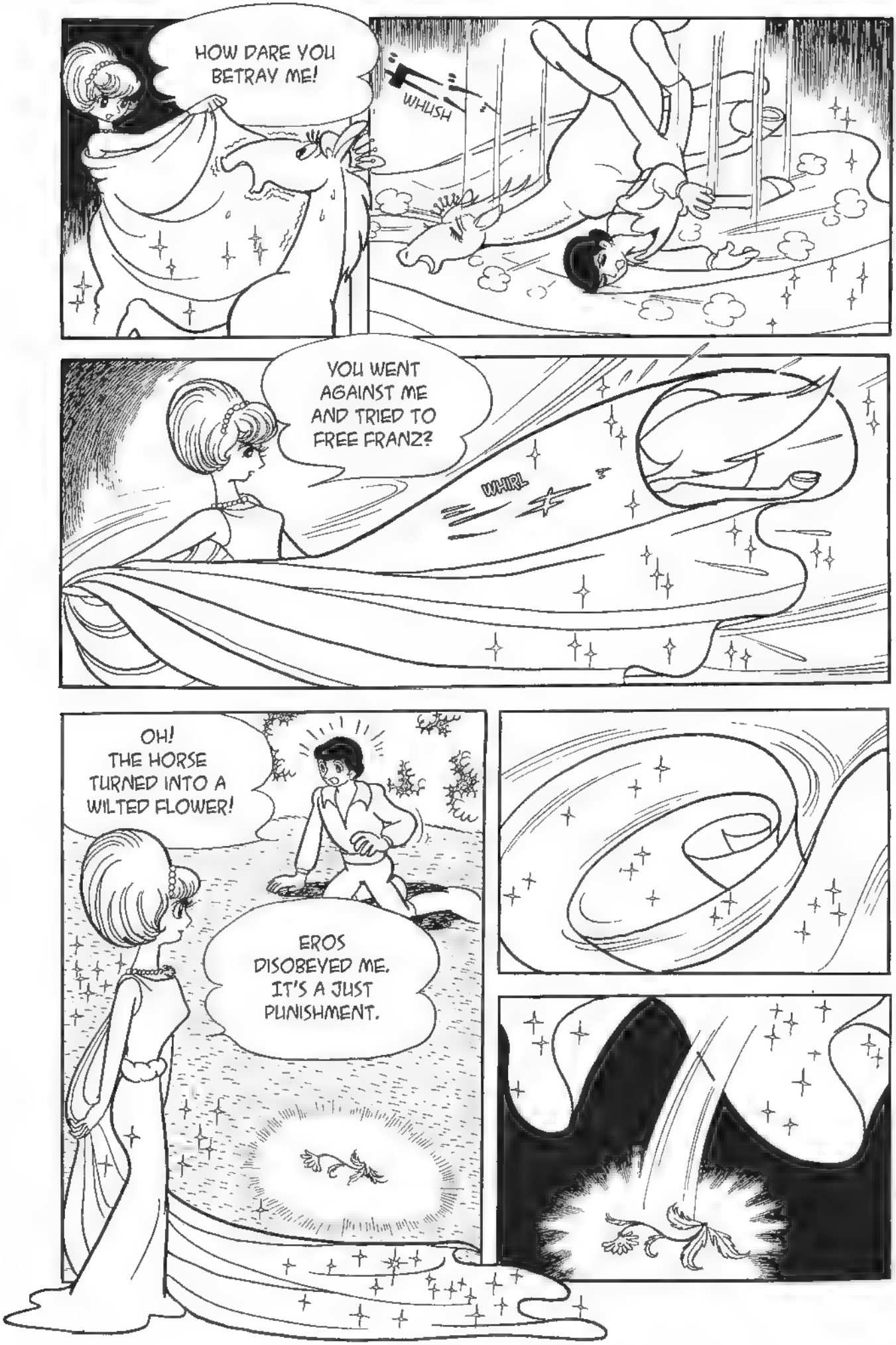

TINK, THE ONLY REASON SHE'S ALIVE IS BECAUSE OF THE FLOWER I GAVE HER. I CAN DO WITH HER AS I PLEASE.
SWEAR YOU'LL NEVER LAY A FINGER ON SAPPHIRE AGAIN!
THERE, HOW'S THAT?
HE SAID IF YOU KEEP BEING CAPRICIOUS AND MEAN HE'LL CALL YOU BACK TO HEAVEN AND PUNISH YOU.
I TOLD THE HEAVENLY FATHER EVERYTHING YOU DID. HE GOT REALLY, REALLY MAD.
NOT A LIE! I AM ANGRY!
YOU LIE. FATHER WOULD NEVER SCOLD ME SO.

SEE? YOU GOT SCOLDED. YOU SHOULDN'T TURN AGAINST YOUR FATHER.
AND THIS IS HOW YOU BEHAVE? BY TURNING PEOPLE UGLY?
I'M THE ONE WHO GAVE YOU REIGN OVER BEAUTY, LOVE AND LIFE,
I SEE I WAS WRONG. I LEAVE THAT WOMAN TO YOUR CARE.
SO YOU'VE HEARD, HAVE YOU? HOW NASTY.
OK, FINE!
GET HER BACK TO SILVERLAND SAFELY!

TO GET BACK TO SILVERLAND, THEY'LL HAVE TO GO THROUGH THAT RAVINE.
I'LL JUST GIVE UP QUIETLY, SAPPHIRE?
HEH. DO YOU REALLY THINK
I'LL CAST A SPELL THERE, SO WHEN THEY PASS THROUGH,
I KNOW.
HO HO. GREAT PLAN.
AS A PIG, SHE'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO FACE FRANZ. HE'LL HAVE TO GIVE UP ON FINDING HER.
SAPPHIRE WILL TRANSFORM INTO A PIG!

THEN HE'LL NATURALLY BE ENTHRALLED BY ME. HO HO HO.
THIS CLOAK WILL KEEP YOU PRISONER FOR DOZENS OF YEARS. YOU WILL NOT AGE A DAY, BUT SAPPHIRE WILL GROW WITHERED AND OLD.
NO MATTER. I DON'T CARE IF I'M HERE 100 OR 1,000 YEARS, SAPPHIRE WILL LIVE FOREVER IN MY HEART.
I'LL LET YOU GO. DON'T TELL VENUS.
CLIMB ON MY BACK.
POOF
I GIVE UP, FRANZ. YOU ARE TOO UPSTANDING A MAN.


I'LL HANDLE IT. I WANT TO BRING YOU TO SAPPHIRE RIGHT AWAY!
YOU'LL LET ME FLEE? WON'T YOUR MISTRESS BE ANGRY?
OH, NO! IT'S VENUS!
WHERE ARE YOU GOING, EROS?
SHE'S PROBABLY DISGUISED AS A MAN AND HURRYING BACK ALONG THE ROAD TO SILVERLAND.
AAAH!


HOW DARE YOU BETRAY ME!
WHUSH
YOU WENT AGAINST ME AND TRIED TO FREE FRANZ?
WHIRL
OH! THE HORSE TURNED INTO A WILTED FLOWER!
EROS DISOBEYED ME. IT'S A JUST PUNISHMENT.

FRANZ, IF NOTHING ELSE, BELIEVE THAT I LOVE YOU!
I WANT NOTHING TO DO WITH YOU.
YOU'RE AS COLD AS ICE.
GODDESSES ARE WOMEN, TOO! DON'T YOU SEE HOW MUCH I CARE ABOUT YOU? HOW CAN I SOOTHE YOUR TEMPER?
AND YOU CALL YOURSELF A GODDESS? HA! YOU TEAR LOVERS APART, PACK OFF YOUR MINION, ENTRAP INNOCENT PEOPLE... YOU'RE JUST A JEALOUS EGOIST!
O FRANZ! DON'T HATE ME! PLEASE ACCEPT MY LOVE!
I'D GIVE UP MY STATUS AND JUST BE A MORTAL WOMAN FOR YOUR SAKE.
HOW'S THAT ?

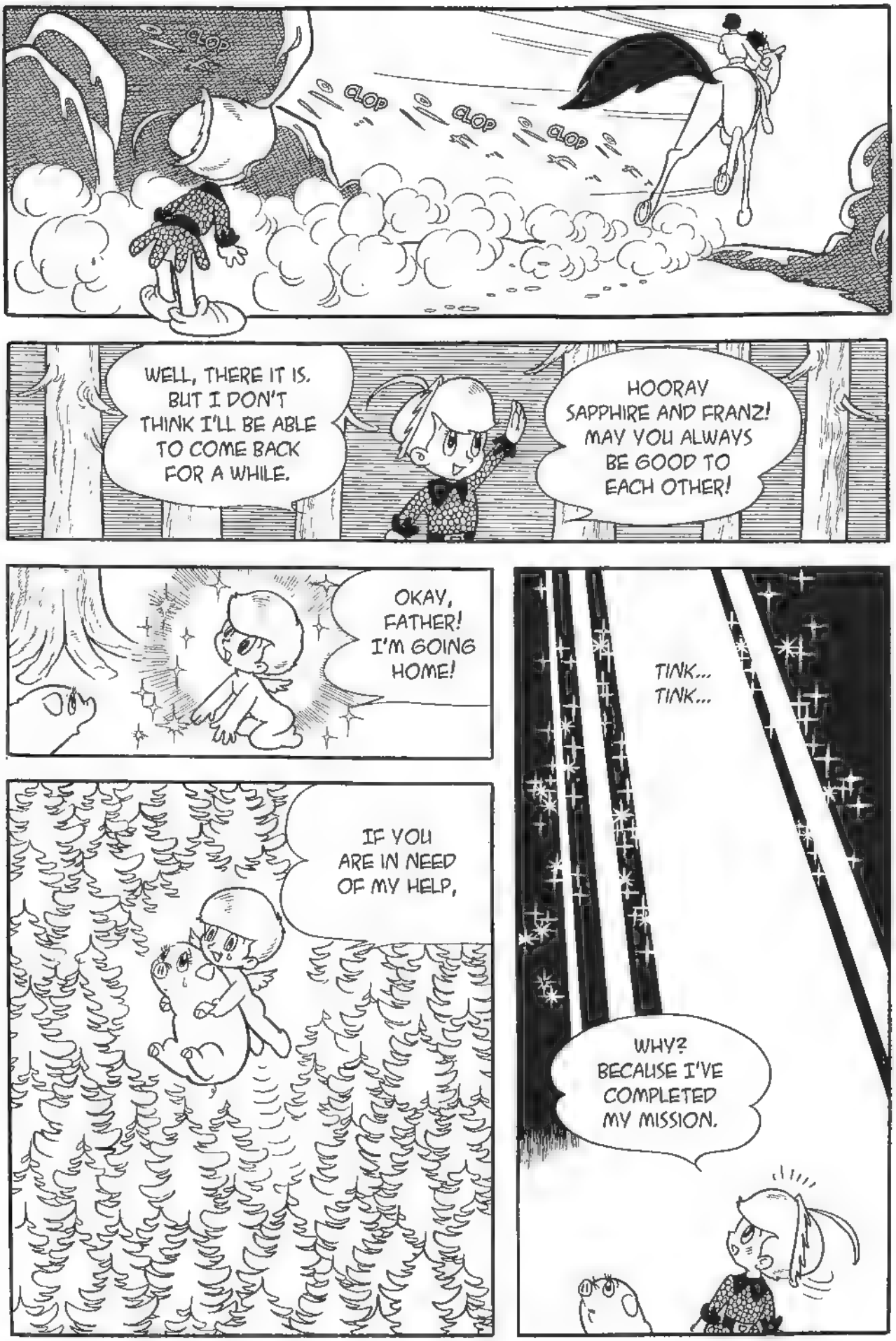
I WON'T ALLOW ANY INTERFERENCE. I'M TAKING SAPPHIRE HOME.
NO...
AH!!
MY TRUMP CARD...
POOP
FRANZ...
SAPPHIRE !!
I'M BREAKING UP WITH YOU. IT'S OVER.
HUH ?!
OH! YOU CALLED ME "FRANZ"! DO YOU REMEMBER ME NOW?

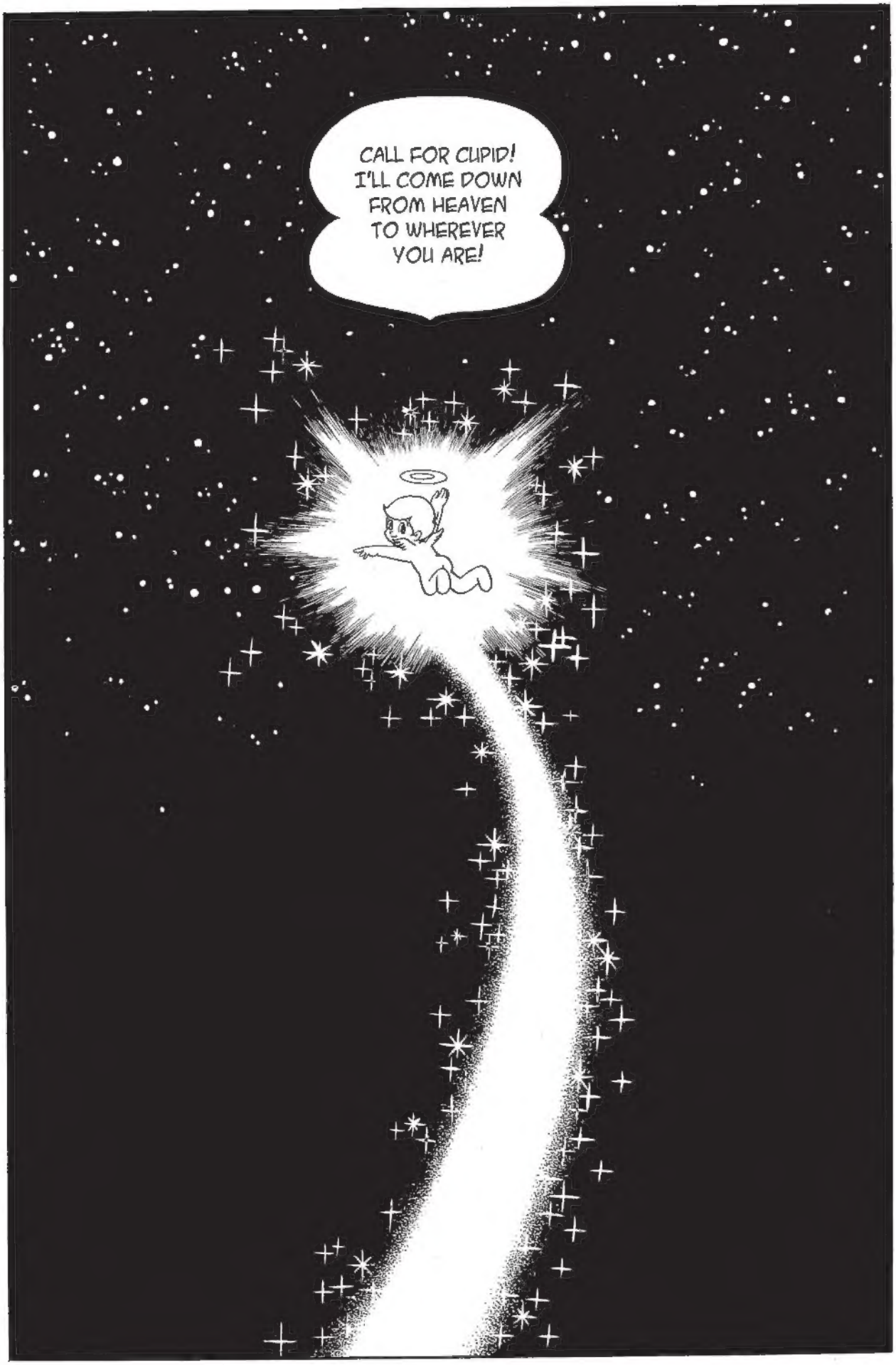
WAIT!!
NO!
WHAT?! WAIT!
GOODBYE! I HATE YOU NOW!
AAH!!
WHAT'S WRONG?

S-SAPPHIRE?!
AAAH...
THERE YOU ARE, FRANZ!!
WHAT'S GOING ON? WHY ARE YOU A PIG? SAPPHIRE! H-HOLD ON!
FRANZ... I REMEMBER EVERYTHING!
YOU AGAIN! YOU'RE NOT ANOTHER PIG, ARE YOU?
HOW NOW? WHAT'S THIS?
OINK!

YES. AND LET'S GET MARRIED! I'LL WEAR A GOWN AND SAY MY VOWS TO YOU AS A WOMAN!
I'M NEVER LETTING YOU GO. WHAT A LONG JOURNEY IT'S BEEN. WE'RE AT ITS END. SAPPHIRE, LET'S GO HOME, TOGETHER.
WHAT?!
IT'S THE GODDESS VENUS.
PROMISE NOT TO BE SURPRISED?
SO WHO WAS THIS "SAPPHIRE" THAT TURNED INTO A PIG?

THIS FORM IS PROBABLY THE HEAVENLY FATHER'S PUNISHMENT FOR HER SELFISHNESS.
DON'T STARE AT HER, SHE'S ASHAMED, POOR THING.
BUT WHY IS VENUS A PIG?
I'LL MAKE SURE VENUS IS TAKEN CARE OF IN HEAVEN, THEN I'LL GO GIVE YOU BLESSINGS.
PLEASE GO ON BACK TO THE CASTLE.
UN-BELIEVABLE ...
LET THAT BASTARD BE.
HE'LL END UP IN A DITCH SOME-WHERE.
WHAT SHALL WE DO WITH NYLON?
HERE'S THE HORSE I WAS RIDING.


CLOP
CLOP
CLOP
CLOP
WELL, THERE IT IS. BUT I DON'T THINK I'LL BE ABLE TO COME BACK FOR A WHILE.
HOORAY SAPPHIRE AND FRANZ! MAY YOU ALWAYS BE GOOD TO EACH OTHER!
OKAY, FATHER! I'M GOING HOME!
IF YOU ARE IN NEED OF MY HELP,
TINK... TINK...
WHY? BECAUSE I'VE COMPLETED MY MISSION.


CALL FOR CUPID! I'LL COME DOWN FROM HEAVEN TO WHEREVER YOU ARE!

FIN

Osamu Tezuka (1928-89) is the godfather of Japanese manga comics. He originally intended to become a doctor and earned his degree before turning to what was still then considered a frivolous medium. His many early masterpieces include the series known in the U.S. as *Astro Boy* and *Kimba the White Lion*. From the early seventies on, he increasingly targeted older readers as well, employing a grittier style and mature themes. With his sweeping vision, deftly intertwined plots, and indefatigable commitment to human dignity, Tezuka elevated manga to an art form. Since his passing, his international stature has only grown, his eight-volume epic *Buddha* winning multiple Eisner and Harvey Awards in the United States.

The adventure charges forward in the second half of Tezuka's beloved *Princess Knight!* The legendary Prince Sapphire continues her gender-bending quest, capturing the hearts of her readers as she goes.

Sapphire valiantly fights off Sir Nylon, Madame Hell is hell-bent on marriage, and a certain jealous goddess puts Prince Franz in her sights. Witches, wedding bells, magic and mayhem—all in a day's work for our beloved heroine. But will all live happily ever after?

Praise for the Author

"It's a mark of his artistic singularity that almost 20 years after his death, we are still playing catch-up with his achievements." —*Newsweek*

"In Tezuka's world, the exquisite collapses into the goofy in a New York minute, the goofy into the melodramatic, the melodramatic into the brutal, and the brutal into the sincerely touching. The surprising result is a work wholly unique and downright fun." —*Time Out New York*

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